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THE ORIGINAL MAGAZINE DEDICATED TO NEBRASKA ATHLETICS

# HUSKERS

ILLUSTRATED

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SEPTEMBER 19, 2009 | VOLUME 29 | NO. 9 | \$3.95





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# HUSKERS

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### NEXT ISSUE

Volume 29, Issue 10 recapping the Virginia Tech game will be mailed on Monday, Sept. 22. Check for updates at [huskersillustrated.com](http://huskersillustrated.com).

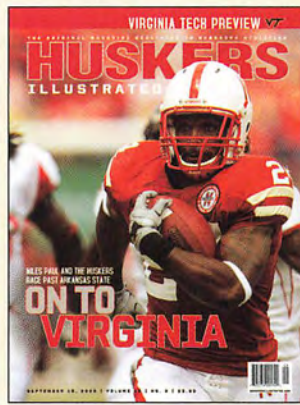
## HUSKERS

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### ON THE COVER

Niles Paul turned in a breakout performance by recording 169 all-purpose yards, including six receptions for 69 yards and a touchdown. The celebration was short however, as the Huskers face a tough road test at Virginia Tech.

Photo by Scott Bruhn





## MAD SEASON

Early games send shivers through fans of Big 12 and top 25 teams



**FOR HUSKER FANS**, it's easy to get lost in the details.

Husker Nation looks for perfection.

Which appears to be acceptable, since head coach Bo Pelini has repeatedly said he expects nothing less.

So what's missing after two games?

While the Huskers have allowed just one touchdown, some are concerned with the yardage Nebraska has allowed – 632 yards in two games.

Others might point to some dropped balls by Husker receivers or the play of Nebraska's young linebackers. Another group wants to see better pressure from the highly touted defensive line.

The reality is Nebraska has won its first two games during what appears to be a very uncertain time in the football world.

In case you've been too busy breaking down Husker film and stat sheets, you may have missed the fact that other teams are finding early non-conference games anything but gimmies.

Missouri had to rally by scoring 21 straight points to defeat Bowling Green, 27-20, in Columbia.

Kansas State surrendered a late field goal to fall at Louisiana-Lafayette, 17-15.

Oklahoma State's national title aspirations dissipated with a 45-35 home loss to Houston.

Florida State had to score twice in the final 35 seconds to beat Jacksonville State, 19-9.

Iowa needed to block two field goals in the final seconds to escape with a victory over Northern Iowa in week one.

And while it's never a good day to be a Colorado fan, can you imagine waking up on Sunday realizing your favorite team is 0-2 after a 54-38 drubbing by Toledo and an opening week loss to Colorado State.

Ouch.

Meanwhile teams like BYU and Boise State are already thinking undefeated seasons and hoping to topple an already shaky BCS system.

What does this have to do with Nebraska?

While each week is an uncertainty, this much is certain – two wins under such circumstances is pretty darn nice. **N**

*Send me your comments or story ideas to [aaron@huskersillustrated.com](mailto:aaron@huskersillustrated.com).*

## HUSKERS ILLUSTRATED

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**A**fter **DERRICK BROOKS** was released in February, **BARRETT RUUD** became the leader of the Tampa Bay Buccaneers' defense. The fact is, Ruud has been the leader, ever since becoming a starter two seasons ago. Tampa Bay head coach **RAHEEM MORRIS** told the Associated Press recently: "To be honest with you, and no disrespect to Derrick, Barrett's been the leader ever since he took over the snaps."

Barrett was a second-round draft pick of the Buccaneers (the 36th player selected overall) in the 2005 draft. He has led the team in tackles in each of the last two seasons. In 2008, he was

credited with 178 tackles, including three sacks. He also intercepted two passes and recovered a fumble.

For a time, it appeared that Barrett and his brother Bo would be playing together. The Buccaneers signed **BO RUUD** to a free agent contract, after he was released by the Cleveland Browns during the off-season. Bo made it to the final round of cuts before being waived on Sept. 5.

► **MATT SLAUSON** was the only Cornhusker on last season's team to survive final cuts, sticking with the New York Jets – and yes, his position coach is **BILL CALLAHAN**.

► **MIKE BROWN**, who was released

by the Chicago Bears and signed by the Kansas City Chiefs, will be playing his 10th professional season, the longest tenure among former Cornhuskers currently in the NFL. Five others are in their ninth season.

► Remember him? **STEVE OCTAVIEN** finished his Cornhusker career in 2007 and signed with the Kansas City Chiefs as an undrafted free agent. He played in four pre-season games before being waived. He subsequently signed to the Washington Redskins' practice squad and then, 10 days later, he was signed by the Dallas Cowboys, playing in two games on special teams in 2008.



# 2MinuteDrill



ZACK BOWMAN



DOMINIC RAIOLA



TY STEINKUHLER

## THOSE WHO MADE THE FINAL CUT

Zack Bowman, DB	Bears (2)
Josh Bullocks, FS	Bears (5)
Chris Kelsay, DE	Bills (7)
Correll Buckhalter, RB	Broncos (9)
Russ Hochstein, OG	Broncos (9)
LeKevin Smith, NT	Broncos (4)
Barrett Ruud, LB	Buccaneers (5)
Ralph Brown, CB	Cardinals (9)
*Ryon Bingham, NT	Chargers (5)
Demorrio Williams, LB	Chiefs (6)
Mike Brown, SS	Chiefs (10)
Steve Octavien, LB	Cowboys (1)
*Stewart Bradley, LB	Eagles (3)
Matt Slauson, OL	Jets (R)
*Daniel Bullocks, FS	Lions (4)
Dominic Raiola, C	Lions (9)
Brandon Jackson, RB	Packers (3)
Josh Brown, K	Rams (7)
*Adam Carriker, NT	Rams (3)
Richie Incognito, OL	Rams (5)
Sam Koch, P	Ravens (4)
Fabian Washington, CB	Ravens (5)
Carl Nicks, OL	Saints (2)
Scott Shanle, LB	Saints (7)
Kris Brown, K	Texans (7)
Kyle Vanden Bosch, DE	Titans (9)
*Injured reserve	

## THOSE WHO DID NOT (cut in the final week)

Maurice Purify, WR	Bengals
Nate Swift, WR	Broncos
Bo Ruud, LB	Buccaneers
Chris Patrick, OL	Eagles
Jay Moore, LB	49ers
Todd Peterson, WR	Jaguars
Zach Potter, DE	Jets
Ty Steinkuhler, DE	Jets
Lydon Murtha, OL	Lions
Titus Adams, DL	Patriots
Terrence Nunn, WR	Patriots
Cody Glenn, LB	Redskins

## SIDELINES



### BO'S EXPECTATIONS

Give **BO PELINI** credit. He doesn't apologize for high expectations. Before the opener against Florida Atlantic, he was asked if he was excited to get started following the Cornhuskers' "great" 9-4 season in 2008. "I'm excited for this season because I didn't think we had a great season last year," he said. "Nine wins isn't near what I... I didn't come here to win nine games."

He wants consistency. And he expects perfection, as unrealistic as that might be.

"I don't know if I've seen anybody that's ever played a perfect game," he said, pausing and adding: "Well, I did a couple of times... in my own mind."

"You can either settle or you want more, right?"

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## ROAD WOES

Despite an opening-game loss to Alabama, Virginia Tech remained in the Associated Press Top 20 rankings, dropping to No. 14. If Virginia Tech is still in the Top 20 this week, the Cornhuskers will be trying to reverse recent history when they visit Blacksburg, Va., on Saturday.

Nebraska has lost 17 consecutive road games against Top-20 opponents, dating to a 27-14 victory against No. 2-ranked Washington at Seattle in the third game of the 1997 season.

The streak doesn't include neutral sites, for bowl or conference championship games.

The Cornhuskers' only road victories against ranked teams during that stretch were at No. 24 Texas A&M in 2006 (28-27) and at No. 23 Notre Dame in 2000 (27-24, OT).

During the 1990s, Nebraska was 6-5-1 against Top 20 teams in true road games.

### HUSKERS ON THE ROAD VS. TOP 20 TEAMS

10/31/2008	at No. 4 Oklahoma, 62-28
10/11/2008	at No. 7 Texas Tech, 37-31 (OT)
11/3/2007	at No. 8 Kansas, 76-39
10/27/2007	at No. 17 Texas, 28-25
10/6/2007	at No. 17 Missouri, 41-6
9/16/2006	at No. 4 USC, 28-10
11/13/2004	at No. 2 Oklahoma, 30-3
11/1/2003	at No. 16 Texas, 31-7
11/16/2002	at No. 11 Kansas State, 49-13
9/28/2002	at No. 19 Iowa State, 36-14
11/23/2001	at No. 14 Colorado, 62-36
11/11/2000	at No. 16 Kansas State, 29-28
10/28/2000	at No. 3 Oklahoma, 31-14
10/23/2000	at No. 18 Texas, 24-20
11/14/1998	at No. 2 Kansas State, 40-30
10/10/1998	at No. 18 Texas A&M, 28-21

## HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM FAN POLL

Nebraska has lost 17 straight road games against Top-20 opponents, with its last win coming against second-ranked Washington at Seattle in the third game of the 1997 season. Assuming Virginia Tech is still ranked in the top 20, will the Huskers win in Blacksburg and snap this streak?



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## PRE-GAME ROUTINE

Sophomore defensive tackle **JARED CRICK** can't explain why but it has been part of his pre-game routine since middle school in Cozad, Neb. He has to tie his cleated football shoes a certain way. And if it doesn't feel right, he'll untie them and try again. "I don't know what it is," he said.

He also relies on music to get him in the right frame of mind. If he's too "geeked up," he'll listen to something mellow, rhythm and blues, gospel, easy listening. If he needs to get "amped up," he listens to hard rock or rap. The latter is usually the case for games with late-morning starts.

"I'm not a morning person at all," said Crick, who prefers night games — particularly at home, of course. "If it's a night game, I need to be settled down. I love night games."

## NO STAGE DAD, OR MOM

**ZAC LEE**'s dad, Bob, played 12 seasons in the NFL, with the Vikings, Falcons and Rams. His best season, statistically, was

in 1973, when he completed 120-of-230 passes (52.2 percent) for 1,786 yards and 10 touchdowns with only eight interceptions.

Despite that background, Bob Lee hasn't meddled, according to Cornhusker offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach **SHAWN WATSON**. "It's been awesome because he understands, having been a quarterback that played at a very high level, how important it is to go through the bumps and bruises of being a quarterback," said Watson. "That's a process that has to be managed through hard learning."

"Bob knew that. He just dropped Zac off and said, 'Hey, coach him.' And that's the way it's been. He also said, 'Hey, coach him and coach him hard.' So I have. Zac has done a nice job of responding to that. I'm sure his mom and dad at home, knowing them, they're really supportive of him."

"That's their son; they've been parents, and I've been coach. They've kept that line there, which has allowed Zac, I think, to get to where he's at today."

## SIDELINES



### SMILING ASSASSIN II

**GEORGE ANDREWS**, a co-captain and All-America defensive end in 1978, earned the nickname the "Smiling Assassin" because of his easy-going, off-field demeanor.

Freshman linebacker **ERIC MARTIN** appears to be following in Andrews' footsteps. "I don't know if I've ever seen him without a smile on his face," linebackers coach **MIKE EKELER** said of Martin.

Ekeler also has described Martin as among the team's most physical players, a "physical joker."

### CORRECTION

The official statistics for the opener against Florida Atlantic showed that seven Cornhusker true freshmen saw action: **REX BURKHEAD, CODY GREEN, ERIC MARTIN, P.J. MANGIERI, ANTONIO BELL, ANDREW GREEN** and **C.J. ZIMMERER**. Turns out because of confusion over duplicate jersey numbers, Andrew Green and Zimmerer did not get in the game. Green, a defensive back, wore No. 11, the same as wide receiver Curenski Gilleylen. Zimmerer, a fullback, wore No. 31, as did cornerback **JASE DEAN**.



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## HALL OF FAME

Five former Huskers were among those inducted into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame the weekend of the opening game against Florida Atlantic.

**DANA BRINSON**, WB (1985-86-87-88)

**KENNY BROWN**, WB (1975-77-78-79)

**DENNIS CARLSON**, OT (1964-65)

**KELLY SAALFELD**, C (1977-78-79)

**STEVE WARREN**, DT (1996-97-98-99)

In addition, **ZACH WIEGERT** (1991-92-93-94), an automatic inductee as an Outland Trophy-winning offensive tackle on the Cornhuskers' 1994 national championship team, was honored.

The Hall also recognized the Walter and Suzanne Scott family with the Clarence E. Swanson Meritorious Service Award and the Fischer brothers – Cletus (1945-46-47-48), Kenneth (1948-49), Rex (1955) and

Pat (1958-59-60) – with the Lyell Bremser Special Merit Award.

## WHERE THEY ARE NOW

Quarterback **HARRISON BECK**, place-kicker **JORDAN CONGDON** and running back **LEON JACKSON** were prominent members of Nebraska's 2005 recruiting class. Beck, who transferred to North Carolina State from Nebraska, is now at North Alabama, playing for first-year head coach **TERRY BOWDEN**. Congdon earned the starting job at USC and was put on scholarship there. Jackson, now Wright-Jackson, is a running back at Hawaii. After leaving Nebraska following his freshman year, Wright-Jackson enrolled at Columbia Basin College in Pasco, Wash., before transferring to Hawaii.

He didn't play football at Columbia Basin College, which is located in his hometown.

## SIDELINES



### SETTLED DOWN, AND IN

Redshirted freshman wide receiver Khiry Cooper didn't go through spring practice, playing with the Husker baseball team instead. "He's a deer in the headlights because he missed spring, which is an important time," wide receivers coach Ted Gilmore said during pre-season camp. Cooper adjusted, however, enough so that he saw action in the season-opener.



### SOUND ADVICE

Former Cornhusker Mike Minter (1993-94-95-96), an all-conference safety, visited Lincoln during the summer and spent a week working with Nebraska's safeties. "His biggest advice to me was to be patient and see it first before I react," senior Larry Asante told the Lincoln Journal Star.

Oh yes, Minter also played 10 seasons in the NFL, with the Carolina Panthers.



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## "Fumblerooski" just a dream for Hickman

**C**ornhusker center **JACOB HICKMAN** is familiar with the play. He has watched it on video.

On third-and-5 at the Miami 19-yard line, trailing 17-0 in the second quarter of the 1984 Orange Bowl game, center **MARK TRAYNOWICZ** snaps the ball to quarterback **TURNER GILL**, who sets it on the ground. Right guard **DEAN STEINKUHLER**, a high school fullback, picks up the ball and rambles wide left for the touchdown. "That's awesome," Hickman said. "That was Stein's dad."

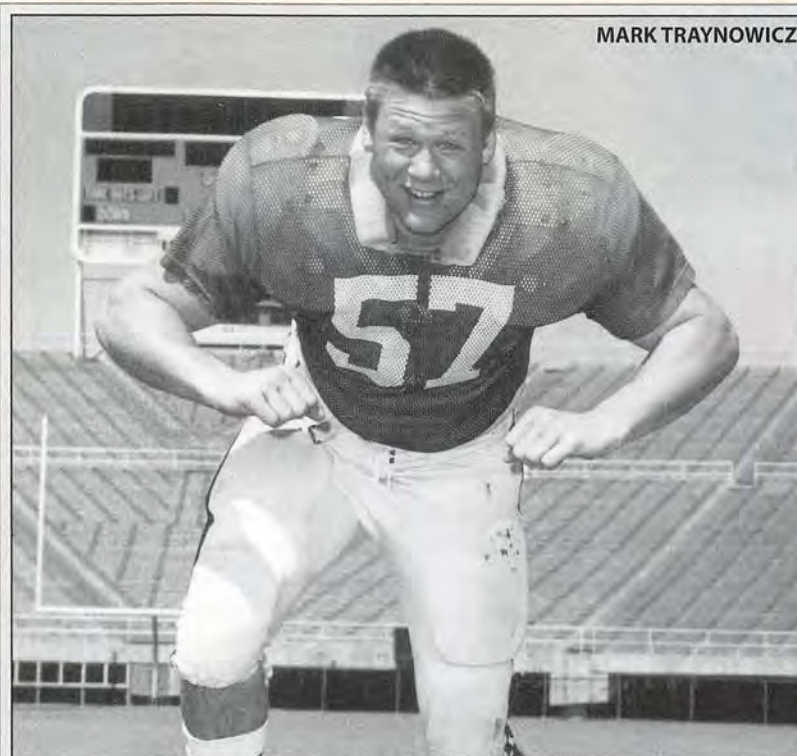
Steinkuhler's sons have followed in his footsteps at Nebraska. Baker is a redshirted freshman defensive tackle. Ty, also a defensive tackle, completed his eligibility last season.

The play on which Dean Steinkuhler scored the touchdown was known as the "fumblerooski." And the 1984 Orange Bowl game wasn't the first time coach Tom Osborne called the trick play. Nebraska had run it twice before, both at Oklahoma in 1979, and the Cornhuskers would run the play again against Colorado at Memorial Stadium in 1992, before the NCAA instituted a rule making it illegal.

Hickman was asked recently if he had ever dreamt about the "fumblerooski" being legal again, so he could score a touchdown. "Kind of," he said. "I've always wanted to score."

But there aren't many scoring opportunities for an offensive lineman.

"Now that's illegal, and everything's illegal, except maybe for a tackle screen. So I'm never going to touch the ball



MARK TRAYNOWICZ

### HUSKER "FUMBLEROOSKI"

John Havekost, LG	11 yards	17-14 loss at Oklahoma, 1979
Randy Schleusener, RG	15 yards, touchdown	17-14 loss at Oklahoma, 1979
Dean Steinkuhler, RG	19 yards, touchdown	31-30 loss, Miami, 1984 Orange Bowl
Will Shields, RG	16 yards	52-7 victory, Colorado, 1992

unless I strip (from) some guy (opposing player) who makes an interception and be a hero," said Hickman. "I do dream of scoring, somehow, some ridiculous course of events."

Another scenario involves his scooping up a fumble by a teammate.

"I could just see myself, just trying to run and getting caught at, like, the 5 (yard line), messing up or fumbling or something," Hickman said. "I'd be like, 'Two hands, close my eyes and run.'"

In his touchdown dream, he doesn't celebrate. Rather, "(I) just take my pads off and walk off, 'See ya.' What else do I have to do? I scored. It's like, I'm not

going to do that again," he said.

He's not sure he could match the Steinkuhler touchdown.

"I don't think I'm as fast as he was, either. He took that edge, and he's a big fella," said Hickman. "He was pulling away. He was scoring regardless. That's a sweet play. That was still a guard, though. That's not even me (a center) still. I was hoping for, like, a center sneak, where I fake snap and run.

"But that's also illegal. You can't do anything now. Man, no fun for the fat kids."

By the way, the 6-foot-4, 290-pound Hickman isn't exactly fat.



# 2MinuteDrill



# N



## Hastings, NE



Had Nebraska football coach **BILL GLASSFORD** been more aggressive in his recruitment, **TOM OSBORNE** (pictured) might well have played for the Cornhuskers instead of paying his own way and playing at Hastings College, where his paternal grandfather and his father had played before him.

Glassford offered Osborne, the state high school athlete of the year in 1955, a scholarship. In fact, Jerry Bush, the Cornhuskers' basketball coach, also offered him a scholarship. The offers notwithstanding, however, neither Glassford nor Bush seemed all that interested.

So Osborne wouldn't come to Nebraska until seven years later, after earning state college athlete of the year honors twice and spending three years in the NFL, the first on the San Francisco 49ers' practice squad, the second and third as a receiver for the Washington Redskins. He was second on the team in receiving in 1961, with 22 catches for 297 yards and two touchdowns.

**DID YOU KNOW?** Highway 281 between Hastings and Grand Island is named the Tom Osborne Expressway.

► The Jacob Fisher Rainbow Fountain is the largest of its kind between Denver and Chicago, with sprays reaching as high as 67 feet and, according to [hastingsutilities.com](http://hastingsutilities.com), more than 2 million "color-waterform configurations." The original number of such configurations, before computerization in 1983, was 32. The fountain was created for the 1932 Adams County Fair and then moved to Highland Park.

► The largest ammunition depot in the United States was located near Hastings during World War II. **N**

### HASTINGS, NE

**County:** Adams (county seat)  
**Population:** 25,394  
**Distance from Lincoln:** 90 miles

#### NU football lettermen:

Rod Baker, LB (1999-00)  
Johnny Bell, HB (1899-01-02-03)  
Ben Buettenback, LB  
(1996-97-98-99)

\*Ted Connor, T (1952-53)

Monte Engebritson, TE  
(1981-82-83)

Don Fricke, C (1958-59-60)

Cliff Hopp, FB (1951)

\*\*Harry Hopp, HB (1938-39-40)

Wally Hopp, FB (1942)

Dick Kleiber, G (1957)

Josh Kohl, LB (1996-97-98)

Francis Leik, G (1946)

Keven Lightner, OT (1985-86-87)

Dennis Pavelka, OT (1974)

Jim Prevette, LB (1993)

Robert Stephens, QB (1925-26)

@\*Alonzo Stiner, T (1925-26)

Wayne Weber, QB (1965-66)

Joel Wilks, OG (1992-93-94)

Jerry Yeager, E (1953)

\*First-team all-conference

@All-American

**WORTH NOTING:** Kool-Aid was invented in Hastings by Edwin Perkins and his wife Kitty in Hastings in 1927. Kool-Aid Days has become an annual event in Hastings the second week of August. The six original flavors were: strawberry, cherry, lemon-lime, grape, orange and raspberry.

## SIDELINES

### LET'S GET PHYSICAL



Linebackers coach **MIKE EKELER** during training camp

on his emphasis on physicality: "We're not going to take a side on a fullback. We're going to hit him right under the chin, split his chin, and get off and make a play." Also: "We have to get to the point where there are no free passes. If a receiver's going to drag across the middle, we're going to take his damn head off."

In Ekeler's estimation, the linebackers weren't a physical enough group last season.

### FAMILIAR FACE, OR ARM

**JOE BROEKEMEIER** was among those who joined the football team as a walk-on when the semester's classes began. Broekemeier has been a pitcher on the baseball team. A multi-sport athlete at Aurora, Neb., High School, the 6-foot-4, 210-pound Broekemeier is listed as a quarterback.

Broekemeier redshirted as a true freshman in 2007, then missed the 2008 baseball season because of a back injury. He appeared in eight games in 2009, with a 1-0 record and 5.60 ERA.

He no longer plays baseball and is a junior in eligibility.



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# Pierre Allen

6-5, 265, Junior, Defensive End, Denver

**How would you describe your ascension to starting at defensive end after Barry Turner was injured in 2008?**

It was a process. Game by game I began to feel more confident. By the end of the season, my confidence was pretty high and I was able to play at a high level. I knew I could play well right away, but it was more or less getting the mental aspect down and actually executing in the real game. It was different from practice.

**Hi: You are a family man, with a wife and son, Pierre Jr. What's it like balancing that with football and school?**

ALLEN: It can be tough at times, but it's great. It's great to have your family with you, and I love them. I love my son to death, and I love having him around. The toughest part is being away from him because I spend so much time up here (at Memorial Stadium). But when I get the chance to get home and see him, it's nothing but love.

**Hi: What makes the 2009 season a success for Nebraska and you?**

ALLEN: I don't really care about personal goals too much. For the team, our goal is a championship and nothing less. That's success for us. We know there's nobody on our schedule that we can't beat, so success to us this year will be a championship.

**Hi: Any special meaning behind the No. 95 jersey?**

ALLEN: They just gave it to me when I got here. I don't know if it's because I wore No. 5 in high school and d-linemen wear 90s, so they had to put the 95 together. My favorite number is 34. That was my basketball number and Shaq (Shaquille O'Neal) used to be my favorite player. If I could have had that (number switch) done, I would have. But I'm cool with 95.

**Hi: What are your biggest talents outside of football?**

ALLEN: Basketball and singing. I do R&B, and do performances in the locker room. Me and (senior lineman) David Harvey (pictured left) do it all the time. We're real good. (Senior linebacker) Phillip Dillard (pictured right) does it too. We have our own little R&B crew. We just do it whenever.

**Hi: What was your favorite moment from last season?**

ALLEN: Probably the end of the bowl game. That's when we all came together, and you could see all the hard work paid off. It was great to win the bowl and end the season on a bang like that.

**Hi: What's the biggest myth about playing college football?**

ALLEN: It's not all peaches and cream like everybody thinks. You have to go to class. We have to do a lot of work, have to put a lot of hours into study hall. We spend more hours up here than we do with our own families. It can definitely be tough. Some people think we're lying about it (laughing). They think we don't have to do any work and can just sit in class or don't have to go to class. But Bo and the academic staff check class on a daily basis.

**Hi: What's the toughest part about playing defensive end?**

ALLEN: We're the only position – along with defensive linemen and the offensive line – that makes contact every play. No matter what, we have to make contact every play. Over a period of time, that can start wearing on you. You have to deal with it by preparing yourself mentally and physically so when you get to the games you've already dealt with it and you can keep your fatigue in check.

**Hi: If you could play any position on the field, what would it be?**

ALLEN: I'd probably play somewhere where I could score touchdowns. They seem to know your name a little bit better when you're scoring. I'd play running back because I like what Roy (Helu Jr.) has been doing lately.

**Hi: Do you have a touchdown dance in the vault?**

ALLEN: Oh yeah, I'm a dancer too; I forgot that from earlier. I do it all (laughing). I'd do some juking, the moonwalk, stuff like that.





# Dana Brinson

## Georgian contacted Nebraska first

**ATHLETIC DIRECTOR** Tom Osborne was addressing the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony Sept. 4th when Dana Brinson and his wife walked into Memorial Stadium after a late-arriving flight from Atlanta.

Osborne was telling the crowd about Brinson's large family and wondering if the Huskers' first recruit from Georgia in three decades would make it to Lincoln for the first time in two decades.

Arriving just in time for the celebration, Brinson matched Osborne's line about having 12 kids. "I guess if children are our future, my wife and I did more than our fair share," he said.

"I guess you could say that I always found a way to test Coach Osborne more than he expected and more than he probably wanted," Brinson said. "Still, I'd like to think that I was one of those players who kind of lightened up Coach Osborne a little bit."

That may indeed be true, but let the record show that Osborne once told former Husker players Mickey Joseph and Tyrone Hughes that "you guys can't hang with Dana Brinson anymore."

Yes, Brinson admits he was "a completely different character" than most of his teammates, and Osborne wasn't exactly fond of personalities that could become larger than the team. But it's important to point out that Dana Brinson recruited Nebraska more than Nebraska recruited him.

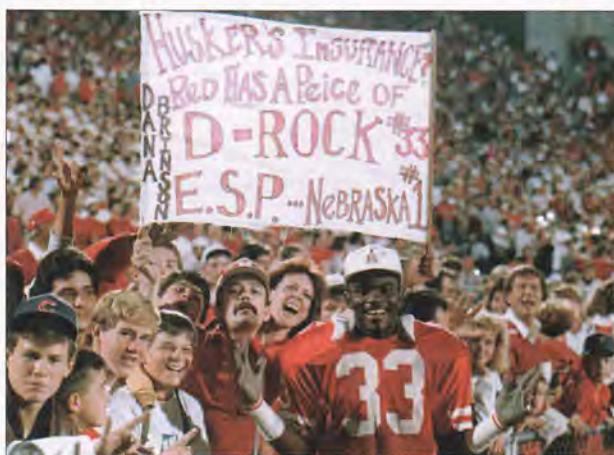
A 5-9, 165-pound all-state running back with 4.3 speed in the 40, Brinson

played for perennial national prep power Valdosta, Ga., High School. Despite being heavily recruited in the South, he became enamored with

Nebraska's 1985 "Scoring Explosion" team that featured Turner Gill, Mike Rozier and Irving Fryar.

"I was so into Nebraska and so totally impressed with Fryar," Brinson said, "that I started to see myself more as a flanker than an I-back. I loved watching Irving play wingback and return kicks, and every time I watched Nebraska on TV, I could see myself doing the same two things he was doing."

Already armed with scholarship offers from Auburn, Tennessee, Georgia, Florida State and Miami, among others, Brinson sat down one day and wrote a



### DANA BRINSON

**LETTERS:** 1985-86-87-88

**POSITION:** Wingback/Kick Returner

**CURRENT:** Owner, D-Rock

Entertainment and DDB Enterprises, Litonia, Ga.

**WIFE:** ROBIN POLITE

**CHILDREN:** 12 in a blended family – six from each side, ranging in age from 27 to 13.

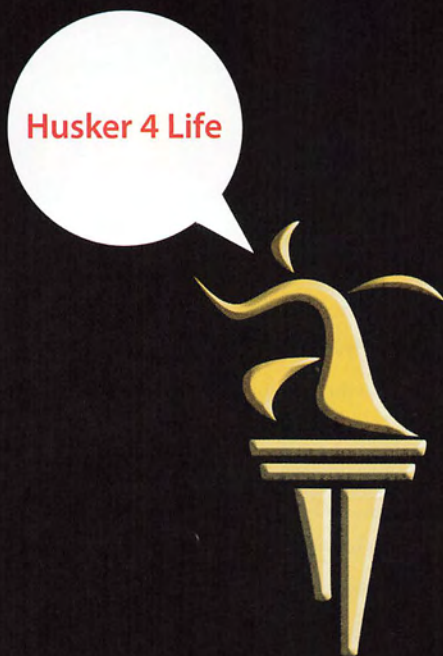
letter, inviting Nebraska coaches to visit Valdosta and check him out.

Assistant coach Jack Pierce did just that and convinced Osborne to offer Brinson a scholarship, an investment that has paid off for everyone. Brinson earned four Nebraska letters, and he played in four major bowl games (one Orange, one Sugar and two Fiestas). He also played in the Senior Bowl and the Japan Bowl. As a senior, in 1988, he earned first-team All-Big Eight honors.

While injuries cut short his pro career that included one year with the San Diego Chargers and another season with London in the World Football League, Brinson, 44, remains proud about taking the time to write that letter to Nebraska more than a quarter century ago.

It was, after all, the first step in his journey into the Nebraska Football Hall of Fame. **N**





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## STATE OF THE HUSKERS

BY CURT MCKEEVER

# Suh could be on historic path

**FOR A GUY WHO** started his senior season with a six-tackle performance that also included a pass breakup, Ndamukong Suh got very little love from Bo Pelini.

A few days after the Huskers' 49-3 win against Florida Atlantic, Pelini said the interior line play of Suh and Jared Crick rated "average, at best."

Ouch.

Of course, when you're Suh, deemed to be the top defensive difference-maker in the Big 12, you get used to the idea that your coach is expecting a lot.

No wonder that after hearing about his coach's appraisal, Suh barely felt a sting.

"I understand what he means behind it," Suh said, seeming to be quite aware of the coaching staff's high standards and their reluctance to coddle even the most-proven players. "They're going to treat you the same whether you're a starter or scout-team guy."

Not that Suh's ever been a scout-teamer. OK, well maybe when he didn't get to see the field much as a ninth-grader one year after he first started playing organized football in his hometown of Portland, Ore.

But based on where he sits now, there are reasons to believe he could finish his career ranked among the best defensive tackles in Husker history.

Ah yes, another list. Let's start this one off with the easy one to follow:

### 1. Look at his tackle totals.

Last season, Suh led all interior linemen in the Big 12 with 76 total stops, 19 for loss, and 7.5 sacks. In the process, he became the first Nebraska lineman since

1973 to be the Huskers' leading tackler.

Most people I know who have followed Nebraska football closely for the last 40 years contend Rich Glover is the best interior lineman they've seen. As a senior in 1972, Glover made an astounding 100 tackles in 12 games while winning the Lombardi Award and Outland Trophy. As a junior, he had 92.

Suh's not going to reach that two-year total, but he's more than in the ballpark with other NU inside defenders held in the highest regard.

Larry Jacobson won the 1970 Outland as a senior while making 73 tackles. As a junior, he had 49.

Danny Noonan, a lightning-quick, bulldog middle guard had a mind-boggling 26 tackles behind the line out of his 100 total during his final two seasons in 1985-86.

Jason Peter averaged 59 stops in 1996-97.

Suh entered this season with 33 tackles for loss, leaving him within striking distance of No. 2 on the Nebraska career list.

"As long as you take care of two main things – being a complete player and getting your fundamentals down – you'll make plays, because you'll be in the right position to make those plays," he said.

### 2. He regularly makes plays in the biggest of situations.

Remember his interception return for a touchdown against Colorado last season? That play denied the Buffaloes of having any chance for a last-minute, game-winning drive.

Suh also returned a pick for six points

in a close battle with San Jose State. He blocked a kick against Baylor and in the Gator Bowl against Clemson, and also in a game when Nebraska needed to make a statement, had a career-high 12 tackles (four for loss) to fuel a win against Kansas.

### 3. How many interior-line players in the Big 12 have ever been named the league's Defensive Player of the Year?

One, Texas' Casey Hampton in 2000. Suh has no guarantees of becoming No. 2, but he was named this year's Big 12 Preseason Defensive Player of the Year.

### 4. Suh's combination of height, strength and agility allows him to be disruptive in almost any scheme, regardless of down and distance.

Without him, no way does Nebraska go from being 116th against the run in 2007 to 21st one year later.

### 5. He's not just focused on making himself better.

After having not played organized football before eighth grade, Suh eventually figured out that the sport would be his ticket to possibly cutting his college expenses. Along the way, he also learned that the game's not just about him.

If that weren't the case, it would've been a lot easier for him to bolt to the NFL following last season.

"I felt this team had unfinished business," Suh said when announcing in January that he'd be coming back to NU. "I think our seniors last year left this program with a great legacy being that class that turned it around. I kind of want this team to leave that stamp of a higher note." **N**



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# ARKANSAS STATE 9 NEBRASKA 38



QUARTERBACK ZAC LEE  
COMPLETES A PASS TO  
MENELIK HOLT IN THE  
FIRST QUARTER.

PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK



## Setting the tempo

**F**acing an Arkansas State program stocked with enough athletes to upset Texas A&M on its home field last season, the last thing Nebraska wanted to do was let the visiting Red Wolves hang around.

After stressing a quicker offensive tempo in practices throughout the week, the Cornhuskers got off to the ideal start. Nebraska scored touchdowns on its first three possessions and got points on five of its first six drives during a 38-9 victory.

"I felt like we came out of the gates real well, which was something we didn't really do last week, and we wanted to make sure we did," Nebraska center Jacob Hickman said. "We wanted to set the tempo right away, and I think we did that in the opening drive."

Nebraska marched 80 yards on eight plays on its first possession, scoring on Zac Lee's 3-yard TD pass to fullback Tyler Legate. Lee directed an 11-play, 80-yard march on NU's next drive, capped by a 13-yard scoring pass to tight end Mike McNeill.

The next time the Huskers got the ball, it was receiver Niles Paul scoring on a 30-yard reverse to put his team ahead 21-0. The game was barely 16 minutes old.

After a sluggish start in the 49-3 season-opening win over Florida Atlantic, Hickman said the offense has found success by picking up the pace.

"It's essential," Hickman said. "That's



Mike McNeill's 13-yard scoring reception gave the Huskers a 14-0 first-quarter lead.

what we talked about all week was setting the pace for the game -- get in, get out (of the huddle) and get up on the line."

Hickman credited Lee for making sure the offense played fast.

"Zac is really doing a great job of organizing the huddle," Hickman said.

"He's getting the calls out there quickly,

which is one of the big things for a young quarterback.

"A lot of quarterbacks can read the defenses and make the throws, but getting the offensive line on the same page with them and having a good tempo is a big thing." **N**

— by Terry Douglass

PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN



PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN



Curenski Gilleylen hauls in a 43-yard reception to set up the Huskers first score.

PHOTO BY SCOTT BRUHN



Coach Bo Pelini has a word with junior cornerback Anthony West.

PHOTO BY AARON BABCOCK



Eric Martin takes a shot to the throat in the first half.

# REPORT CARD

## RUSHING:

B

The running game was solid not spectacular, a complement to **ZAC LEE**'s passing. The offensive tempo appeared to pick up, after a week's emphasis by the coaches. "I really liked the way we came out. We attacked," coach **BO PELINI** said. "I liked the energy. I liked the effort."

## PASSING:

A

**ZAC LEE** wasn't perfect. He did make a couple of poor decisions, one of which resulted in a successful play, according to offensive coordinator **SHAWN WATSON**. Overall, Lee was on-target, completing 77 percent of his passes, four for touchdowns, without an interception.

## RUSHING DEFENSE:

B

The Blackshirts, who again allowed fewer than 4 yards per carry, will get a severe test at Virginia Tech. Redshirted freshman **RYAN WILLIAMS** carried 16 times for 164 yards and three touchdowns and true freshman **DAVID WILSON** carried 12 times for 165 yards and one touchdown in the Hokies' 52-10 victory against Marshall.

## PASSING DEFENSE:

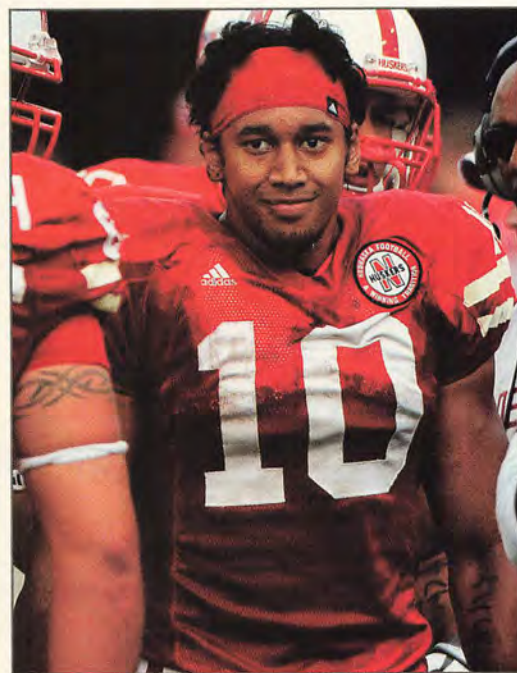
A-

The Cornhuskers took advantage of an inexperienced Arkansas State offensive line and got a good push up-front, which was reflected in four sacks – after no sacks in the opener. Nearly half of the Red Wolves' passing yardage came on two big plays, one of them for 43 yards.

## KICKING/SPECIAL TEAMS:

A

**ALEX HENERY** averaged 42.7 yards on three punts and **ADI KUNALIC** got the ball in the end zone for touchbacks on five-of-seven kickoffs. Henery did miss a field goal attempt, but from 54 yards.



Roy Helu Jr. enjoys a break on the sideline.

PHOTO BY RANDY HAMPTON



PHOTO BY RANDY HAMPTON



## SMILES FOR NILES

Nebraska offensive coordinator **SHAWN WATSON** said it was just a matter of time.

After impressing coaches during fall camp, signs of wide receiver **NILES PAUL** breaking out finally came in a 38-9 win against Arkansas State. Not only did the junior wide receiver establish career highs with six receptions for 69 yards, but he also caught his first career touchdown pass after earlier scoring on a 30-yard reverse.

"We've been running that (reverse) since fall camp and we had it on (the) script and I kind of blew it off and said, 'We're not going to run that,' because we've had it on (the) script every week since last year, but we finally ran it," Paul said. "Of course, the big boys got out there and blocked for me and set it up, so it was a very good play."

Watson said he was proud of Paul, who was limited to two receptions for 13

yards in Nebraska's season opener against Florida Atlantic. But after breaking down video of Arkansas State, Watson figured Paul would get an opportunity to shine.

"We felt like there was a mismatch on him and we tried to go deep a couple of times with him and I thought he played a really good game," Watson said. "We're trying to dial some things into him and create touches so he can use his talent."

"He's had a really good fall camp and he's a great football player. We just need to continue to be creative with him and how we use him and what we do."

### WHAT COULD'VE BEEN

A solid day for **NILES PAUL** could've been much bigger as he hauled in a 70-yard TD pass from **ZAC LEE** early in the second quarter. However, the play was nullified by a holding penalty called on

tackle **MARCEL JONES**.

"I didn't know that until like 10 seconds after that play that it was called back," Paul said. "**CURENSKI (GILLYLEN)**, (**MENELIK HOLT**) and I were in the end zone and I was tired and I just wanted to come back and sit on the bench and they told me I had to come and get back into the game. I was exhausted."

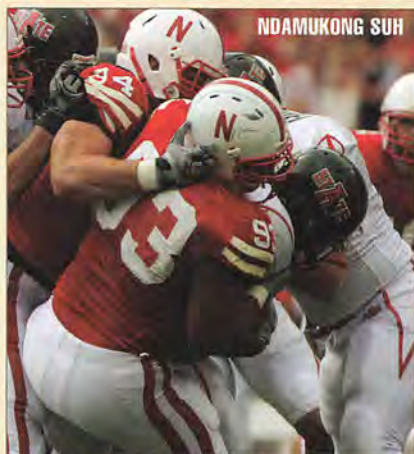
However, Paul probably didn't feel nearly as bad as Jones did.

"It's the worst feeling in the world, but things happen in the game," Jones said. "I told Niles, 'My fault, man,' and basically said I'd make sure I get him into the end zone the next time."

### STILL NOT SATISFIED

Four days after referring to Nebraska's defensive performance in the season opener as "soft," Huskers' coach **BO PELINI** still





NDAMUKONG SUH



LARRY ASANTE

**FRIENDLY WAGER:** Nebraska defensive tackle **NDAMUKONG SUH** stood at the podium during the post-game press conference, intently scanning the final statistics sheet. Asked if he was looking for his individual numbers, Suh said he was actually checking the tackle total of safety **LARRY ASANTE**, declining to offer much additional information.

Later, Asante shed some light on the matter. Asante said he and Suh have a weekly wager with the player who has the fewest tackles forced to do 50 push-ups the following Monday at practice.

After tying in the first game with seven tackles apiece, Asante won the game-two competition by an 8-5 margin. He also forced a fumble, prompting a reporter to ask if he got any extra points for that?

"I'm not too sure about that because he had (1 1/2) sacks," Asante said. "But he still owes me 50."

wasn't satisfied with the defense's overall performance two games in.

"We're sloppy at times," Pelini said. "Sometimes our inexperience in some areas shows up. The communication, it's better, but it's still not where I want it to be."

"We're coming, but we're not there. It's just not what I'm used to seeing on a consistent basis."

While Arkansas State scored the first TD of the season against Nebraska, the Huskers limited the Red Wolves to 274 yards of total offense – 84 yards fewer than the previous game. NU also registered four sacks after having none against Florida Atlantic.

"I like the fact that we have kept the opponent out of the end zone, but we have so many areas where we can keep getting better," NU defensive coordinator **CARL PELINI** said. "We've got very high expectations for this defense."

## HELU KEPT QUIET

After rushing for 152 yards and three TDs against Florida Atlantic, Nebraska I-back **ROY HELU JR.** was held in check by Arkansas State, finishing with 14 carries for 60 yards with a long run of 9 yards.

However, offensive coordinator **SHAWN WATSON** said Helu's relatively quiet day had more to do with the Red Wolves being determined to stop the run.

"We don't ever get caught up on how many yards we passed for or how many we rushed for," Watson said. "What did they give us today? They have us the pass and we took the pass."

Nebraska quarterback **ZAC LEE** finished 27-of-35 through the air for 340 yards and four TDs with no interceptions. Lee said he hopes the passing-game success will open things up for Helu next time.

"Roy is our horse and if he's running the ball well, we're going to ride him," Lee said.

## QUICKLY



### TIGHT END U.?

With 14 different Nebraska players caching passes against Arkansas State, the Husker tight ends were well-represented. Including **MIKE MCNEILL'S** four receptions for 57 yards and two TDs, five tight ends had receptions.

"USC has a stable of running backs and Nebraska has a stable of tight ends, I guess," McNeill said. "Getting the ball spread around to a lot of different guys is nice. We can play a lot of different guys in different positions and do a lot of different routes. It's just nice to have guys who can make plays all the time."

Tight ends **DREU YOUNG**, **KYLER REED**, **BEN COTTON** and **RYAN HILL** each had one reception against the Red Wolves.

### GAME CAPTAINS

Nebraska game captains against Arkansas State were senior defensive end **BARRY TURNER**, senior safety **RICKEY THENARSE**, junior I-back **ROY HELU JR.** and sophomore receiver **CURENSKY GILLYLEN**.



# GameStats

## SUMMARY

### SCORING

Sept. 12, 2009  
Memorial Stadium - Lincoln, Neb.  
Attendance: 85,035

	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	Tot
Florida Atlantic	0	3	0	0	3
Nebraska	7	14	21	7	49

#### First Quarter

	ASU	NU
NU Legate Pass from Lee 3-yards (Henery Kick) 11:40 Drive: 8 plays 80 yds 3:20	0	7

#### Second Quarter

	ASU	NU
NU McNeill Pass from Lee 13-yards (Henery Kick) 01:15 Drive: 11 plays 80 yds 5:20	0	14
NU Paul 30-yard Run (Henery Kick) 13:59 Drive: 3 plays 46 yds 0:51	0	21
ASU Arnold 1-yard Run (Arauco Kick Failed) 05:30 Drive: 6 plays 32 yds 3:12	6	21
NU Henery 26-yard Field Goal 00:09 Drive: 11 plays 58 yds 5:14	6	24

#### Third Quarter

	ASU	NU
NU McNeill Pass from Lee 32-yards (Henery Kick) 09:47 Drive: 4 plays 67 yds 1:36	6	31

#### Fourth Quarter

	ASU	NU
ASU Arauco 42-yard Field Goal 12:05 Drive: 8 plays 39 yds 2:39	9	31
NU Paul Pass from Lee 2-yards (Henery Kick) 08:14 Drive: 7 plays 66 yds 3:44	9	38

## TEAM STATS

	ASU	NU
<b>Total First Downs</b>	15	27
Rushing	11	7
Passing	3	19
Penalty	1	1
<b>Rushing Attempts</b>	38	28
<b>Yards Gained Rushing</b>	186	153
<b>Yards Lost Rushing</b>	43	17
<b>Net Yards Rushing</b>	143	136
<b>Net Yards Passing</b>	131	358
Passes Attempted	20	41
Passes Completed	11	30
Had Intercepted	0	0
Percent Completion	55.0%	73.2%
Yards per Attempt	6.5	8.7
Yards per Completion	11.9	11.9
<b>Total Offensive Plays</b>	58	69
<b>Total Net Yards</b>	274	494
Avg. Gain Per Play	4.7	7.2
<b>Fumbles: No-Lost</b>	2-1	0-0
<b>Penalties: No-Yards</b>	3-20	3-40
<b>Punts: No-Yards</b>	5-225	3-128
Avg. Per Punt	45.0	42.7
Avg. Net Punt	38.8	38.0
<b>Punt Returns: No-Yards</b>	1-14	4-31
<b>Kickoff Returns: No-Yards</b>	2-34	2-53
<b>Interception Returns: No-Yards</b>	0-0	0-0
<b>Fumble Returns: No-Yards</b>	0-0	0-0
<b>Miscellaneous Yards</b>	0	0
<b>Possession Time</b>	28:22	31:38
<b>Third-Down Conversions</b>	2-10	8-13
Percentage	20.0%	61.5%
<b>Fourth-Down Conversions</b>	1-2	0-0
Percentage	50.0%	0.0%
<b>Sacks By: No-Yards</b>	2-16	4-33

## OFFENSIVE INDIVIDUAL STATISTICS

### NEBRASKA

Rushing	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg
Helu Jr.	14	60	0	60	4.3	0	9
Paul	1	30	0	30	30.0	1	30
Burkhead	3	18	0	18	6.0	0	16
Lee	7	28	17	11	1.6	0	11
Ward	1	8	0	8	8.0	0	8
Green	1	7	0	7	7.0	0	7
Jones	1	2	0	2	2.0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>153</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>4.9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>30</b>

Passing	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg
Lee	35	27	77.1	0	340	4	43
Green	6	3	50.0	0	18	0	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>73.2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>43</b>

Receiving	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Paul	6	69	1	20
McNeill	4	57	2	32
Helu Jr.	4	44	0	18
Gilleylen	1	43	0	43
Holt	5	40	0	16
Brooks	2	30	0	20
Young	1	27	0	27
Burkhead	1	11	0	11
Reed	1	9	0	9
Cotton	1	7	0	7
Hill	1	7	0	7
Cooper	1	6	0	6
Kinnie	1	5	0	5
Legate	1	3	1	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>43</b>

Punting	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In 20
Henery	3	42.7	49	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2</b>

Kick Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Paul	2	53	0	29
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29</b>

Field Goals	Made	Att	Lg	Blkd
Henery	1	2	26	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>0</b>

Defense	Tac	Asst	Tot	TFL	Sac	PD	FF	FR
Asante	7	1	8	0-0	0-0	0	1	0
Amukamara	4	3	7	1-2	1-2	2	0	0
Crick	1	4	5	0.5-6	0.5-6	0	0	0
O'Hanlon	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Suh	4	1	5	2.5-18	1.5-17	0	0	0
Lawrence	3	1	4	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Allen	0	3	3	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Compton	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Steinkuhler	1	2	3	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Turner	2	1	3	1-1	0-0	0	0	1
Fisher	0	2	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Hagg	2	0	2	1-8	1-8	0	0	0
Smith	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Thenarse	0	2	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Cassidy	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Klingelhoefer	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Koehler	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0

### ARKANSAS STATE

Rushing	No	Gain	Lost	Net	Avg	TD	Lg
Arnold	14	85	2	83	5.9	1	20
Lawson	9	37	0	37	4.1	0	19
Leonard	11	55	33	22	2.0	0	15
Jones	2	9	0	9	4.5	0	5
TEAM	2	0	8	-8	-4.0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>20</b>

Passing	Att	Comp	%	Int	Yds	TD	Lg
Leonard	20	11	55.0	0	131	0	43
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>43</b>

Receiving	No	Yds	TD	Lg
McLennan	7	69	0	21
Murry	1	43	0	43
Gillott	1	9	0	9
Lawson	1	8	0	8
Clements	1	2	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>43</b>

Punt Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Walker	1	14	0	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>

Kick Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
Thompkins	1	19	0	19
McLennan	1	15	0	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>

Punting	No	Avg	Lg	Blk	TB	FC	50+	In 20
Wilbourn	5	45.0	57	0	1	0	1	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>

Field Goals	Made	Att	Lg	Blkd
Arauco	1	1	42	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>0</b>

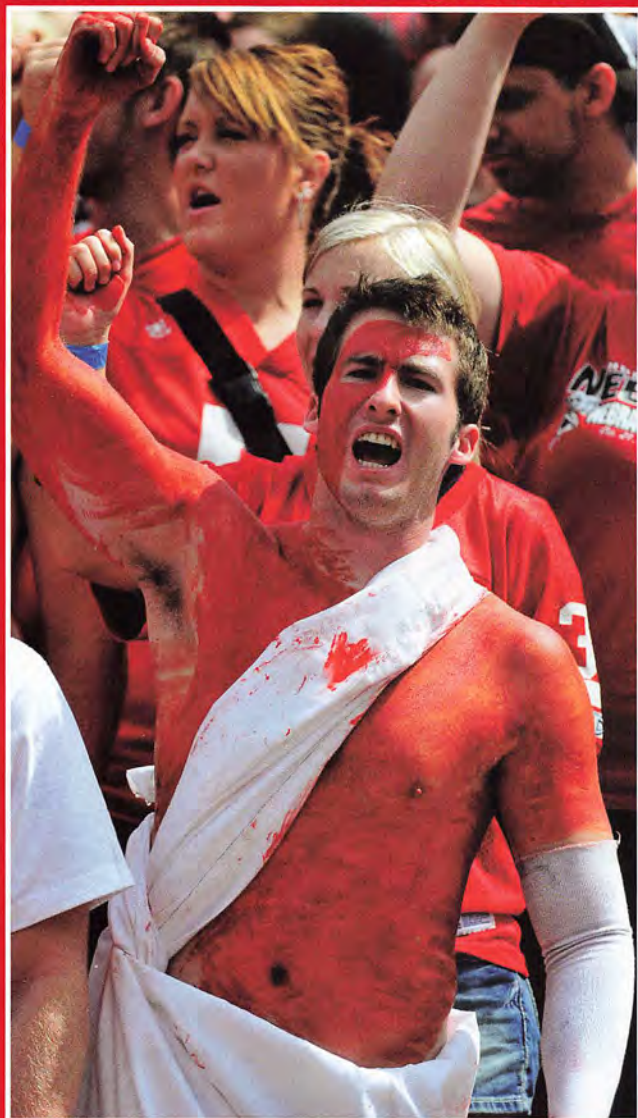
Defense	Tac	Asst	Tot	TFL	Sac	PD	FF	FR
Davis	8	2	10	1-1	0-0	0	0	0
Mingo	4	3	7	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Brown	2	4	6	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Herrold	3	3	6	1-8	1-8	0	0	0
Hardy	2	3	5	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
McCray	3	2	5	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
McKinnon	4	1	5	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Smith	4	1	5	0-0	0-0	1	0	0
Jennings	2	1	3	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Walker	3	0	3	0-0	0-0	2	0	0
Carrington	2	0	2	1-8	1-8	0	0	0
Robertson	0	2	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Robertson	2	0	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Wakwe	1	1	2	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Brown	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Hall	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
McCall	1	0	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Moody	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0
Woods	0	1	1	0-0	0-0	0	0	0

Interception Ret	No	Yds	TD	Lg
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Sat., Sept. 5	Florida Atlantic	Memorial Stadium	W, 49-3
Sat., Sept. 12	Arkansas State	Memorial Stadium	W, 38-9
Sat., Sept. 19	Virginia Tech	Blacksburg, Va.	2:30 p.m.
Sat., Sept. 26	La-Lafayette	Memorial Stadium	6 p.m.
Thur., Oct. 8	Missouri	Columbia, Mo.	8 p.m.
Sat., Oct. 17	Texas Tech	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat., Oct. 24	Iowa State	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat., Oct. 31	Baylor	Waco, Texas	TBA
Sat., Nov. 7	Oklahoma	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat., Nov. 14	Kansas	Lawrence, Kan.	TBA
Sat., Nov. 21	Kansas State	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Fri., Nov. 27	Colorado	Boulder, Colo.	2:30 p.m.
Sat., Dec. 5	Big 12 Championship	Arlington, Texas	7 p.m. (ABC)



# FAN OF THE GAME



First-year UNL Law College student Josh Erlandson of North Platte shows his true colors.

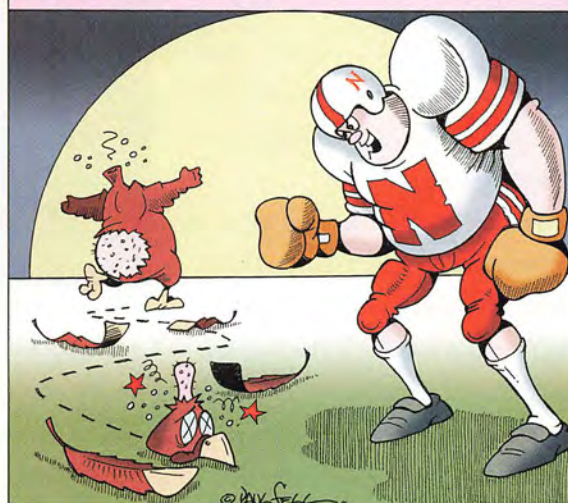
## FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

### NEBRASKA STARS

- ▶ Lincoln Southwest running back prospect **JEFF SEYBOLD** had 11 carries for 111 yards and four touchdowns in a 35-0 win over Lincoln Northeast on Friday night.
- ▶ Omaha Northwest running back **ANTARIES DANIELS** has 29 carries for 129 yards and one touchdown in a losing effort against Millard North.
- ▶ Omaha Central 2011 wide receiver **TED LAMPKIN** had three receptions for 114 yards and two touchdowns on Friday night in a win over Grand Island. Lampkin also had a 77 yard punt return for a score.
- ▶ Millard South quarterback **BRONSON MARSH** had 166 yards rushing, including touchdown runs of 65 and 48 yards in a win over defending Class A state champion Millard West. Marsh also threw 165 yards in the game.

### THE PAUL FELL PREDICTION

## NEBRASKA vs. VIRGINIA TECH



SEPTEMBER 19, 2009  
HUSKERS TAKE ON HOKIES IN "BATTLE OF BLACKSBURG" AND TAKE HOME TURKEY TROPHIES!

## QUICK PICKS



**Aaron Babcock**  
(12-3/6-2)



**Mike Babcock**  
(10-5/6-2)



**Sean Callahan**  
(9-6/6-2)



**John Talman**  
(10-5/6-2)



**Matt Davison**  
(9-6/6-2)

(Season/Last Week)	Aaron Babcock (12-3/6-2)	Mike Babcock (10-5/6-2)	Sean Callahan (9-6/6-2)	John Talman (10-5/6-2)	Matt Davison (9-6/6-2)
Nebraska at Virginia Tech	NU 24-22	VT 23-21	VT 31-27	NU 31-28	NU 24-20
Texas Tech at Texas	UT 35-28	UT 42-24	UT 48-27	UT 42-21	UT 38-17
Kansas State at UCLA	UCLA 35-17	UCLA 35-7	UCLA 38-13	UCLA 38-10	UCLA 27-24
UConn at Baylor	BU 31-10	BU 28-24	BU 31-24	BU 38-13	BU 24-14
Tennessee at Florida	UF 56-10	UF 45-17	UF 52-24	UF 49-17	UF 42-17
Georgia Tech at Miami	UM 35-30	GT 28-27	UM 37-31	GT 35-31	UM 28-27
Georgia at Arkansas	ARK 27-24	UGA 31-20	ARK 34-30	UGA 24-21	UGA 31-21



# Confident Taylor evolves as Hokies' quarterback



BY STEVEN M. SIPPLE

**ASK NEBRASKA** fans about Virginia Tech junior Tyrod Taylor. They'll most likely tell you he's a very gifted quarterback.

In the Hokies' 35-30 triumph last season in Lincoln, Taylor was 9-for-15 passing for 171 yards while rushing 15 times for 87 yards and a touchdown. He was electrifying.

But during most of his first two college seasons, there was a distinction one could make about Taylor. He essentially was an athlete playing quarterback.

However, "He's starting to really become a quarterback," Mike O'Cain, the Hokies' quarterbacks coach, told The Roanoke (Va.) Times in August. "It's his third year, and you see at the end of last year he was beginning to play the quarterback position.

"Tyrod is more confident now. He knows he can make all the throws he needs to make. Our passing game has to improve dramatically for us to be where we want to be. I think it will. I hope it's going to be fun to watch it happen."

The 6-foot-1, 216-pound Taylor, of Hampton, Va., was 9-for-20 passing for 91 yards as Virginia Tech fell 34-24 to Alabama in the teams' season-opener Sept. 5 in Atlanta. It should be noted that the Tide's defense is regarded as one of the nation's best, if not the best.

Bottom line, Taylor is too gifted not to come back strong.

Taylor turned down about 50 other programs to attend Virginia Tech. But



TYROD TAYLOR

this year is the first time since his arrival on campus that he's had the No. 1 job to himself. Sean Glennon, with whom he split time his first two seasons, is gone.

Nevertheless, Taylor was the top rusher among Atlantic Coast Conference quarterbacks with 738 yards (5.0 per carry) last season. He also completed 99-of-173 passes for 1,036 yards and two touchdowns, with seven interceptions. He said before the season he's determined to improve his passing.

## NOTES

► Since the beginning of the 1995 season, only Ohio State and Florida have posted more wins than Virginia Tech, and the Hokies have wound up in the Top 10 in 13 of the past 16 seasons, including five Top 10 finishes during the last 11 years. However, with this year's season-opening

loss to Alabama, Tech fell to 1-25 all-time (including 0-21 away from Blacksburg, Va.) against top-five opponents.

► Since joining the ACC in 2004, the Hokies have won three conference titles, including the past two.

### VIRGINIA TECH QUICK FACTS

**Head coach:** Frank Beamer, 23rd year (177-90-2); 29th season 219-122-4 overall

**Enrollment:** 23,567

**Colors:** Maroon and orange

**2008 record:** 10-4 (6-2 ACC)

### 2009 SCHEDULE

9/5 vs. Alabama (Atlanta)  
9/12 Marshall  
9/19 Nebraska  
10/3 Miami  
10/3 at Duke  
10/10 Boston College  
10/17 at Georgia Tech  
10/29 North Carolina  
11/5 at East Carolina  
11/14 at Maryland  
11/21 NC State  
11/28 at Virginia



## VIRGINIA TECH ROSTER

#	QUARTERBACKS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
3	Logan Thomas	QB	6'6"	233	Fr.
5	Tyrod Taylor	QB	6'1"	216	Jr.
12	Ju-Ju Clayton	QB	6'1"	208	r-Fr.
16	Jeff Beyer	QB	6'5"	227	r-Sr.

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
60	Beau Warren	C	6'3"	288	r-Jr.
67	Michael Via	C	6'7"	284	r-Fr.
64	Richard Graham	OG	6'6"	306	r-Sr.
65	Matt Baldwin	OG	6'6"	299	r-So.
68	Jaymes Brooks	OG	6'2"	300	r-So.
70	Sergio Render	OG	6'3"	313	Sr.
54	Nick Becton	OT	6'6"	311	r-Fr.
62	Blake DeChristopher	OT	6'5"	313	r-So.
71	Vinston Painter	OT	6'6"	322	r-Fr.
72	Andrew Lanier	OT	6'5"	279	r-So.
77	Ed Wang	OT	6'5"	309	r-Sr.
75	Greg Nosal	OT/G	6'6"	284	r-So.

#	RUNNING BACKS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
27	Joey Phillips	FB	5'11"	215	r-Fr.
31	Kenny Younger	FB	6'0"	223	r-Jr.
42	Kenny Jefferson	FB	5'10"	240	r-Sr.
4	David Wilson	TB	5'10"	200	Fr.
25	Josh Oglesby	TB	5'11"	210	r-So.
32	Darren Evans	TB	6'0"	218	r-So.
34	Ryan Williams	TB	5'10"	206	r-Fr.
46	Zac Evans	TB	5'10"	192	r-Fr.

#	RECEIVERS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
11	Dyrell Roberts	FL	6'2"	190	So.
19	Danny Coale	FL	6'0"	206	r-So.
80	Brandon Dillard	FL	5'11"	176	r-Sr.
83	Patrick Terry	FL	5'11"	190	r-So.
7	Marcus Davis	SE	6'4"	236	r-Fr.
29	Xavier Boyce	SE	6'4"	223	r-Fr.
35	Austin Fuller	SE	6'2"	218	r-Fr.
81	Jarrett Boykin	SE	6'2"	215	So.
50	Collin Carroll	SN	6'3"	240	r-So.
63	Matt Tuttle	SN	6'0"	229	r-Sr.
8	Greg Boone	TE	6'3"	283	r-Sr.
13	Randal Dunn	TE	6'2"	223	r-Fr.
18	Sam Wheeler	TE	6'3"	259	r-Sr.
85	Rob Stanton	TE	6'5"	236	r-Jr.
86	Eric Martin	TE	6'2"	256	Fr.
87	Prince Parker	TE	6'6"	251	r-Jr.
88	Andre Smith	TE	6'5"	268	r-Jr.

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
6	Jason Worlds	DE	6'2"	262	r-Jr.
33	Chris Drager	DE	6'3"	249	r-So.
47	Nekos Brown	DE	6'2"	248	Sr.
55	Isaiah Hamlette	DE	6'4"	245	r-Fr.
82	Steven Friday	DE	6'4"	240	r-Jr.
45	Joe Jones	DT	6'2"	250	r-Fr.
53	Dwight Tucker	DT	6'1"	280	r-Fr.
56	Demetrius Taylor	DT	6'0"	273	r-Sr.
59	Courtney Prince	DT	6'3"	270	r-Fr.
91	John Graves	DT	6'3"	277	r-Jr.
93	Kwamaine Battle	DT	6'0"	281	r-So.
95	Cordarrow Thompson	DT	6'2"	301	r-Sr.
98	Antoine Hopkins	DT	6'0"	301	r-Fr.

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
9	Cris Hill	CB	5'11"	183	r-So.
15	Eddie Whitley	CB	6'1"	183	So.
20	Jayron Hosley	CB	5'10"	170	Fr.
21	Rashad Carmichael	CB	5'11"	186	r-Jr.
22	Stephan Virgil	CB	5'11"	189	Sr.
37	Jacob Sykes	CB	6'0"	193	r-So.
14	Lorenzo Williams	FS	6'2"	215	So.
17	Kam Chancellor	FS	6'4"	230	Sr.

#	LINEBACKERS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
26	Cody Grimm	LB	5'11"	210	r-Sr.
28	Alonzo Tweedy	LB	6'2"	186	r-Fr.
36	Jake Johnson	LB	6'1"	231	So.
38	Quillie Odom 1	LB	6'1"	233	So.
39	Lyndell Gibson	LB	5'10"	220	r-Fr.
41	Cam Martin	LB	6'1"	209	r-Sr.
43	Jeron Gouveia-Winslow	LB	6'2"	200	r-Fr.
44	Zach Luckett	LB	6'3"	209	Jr.
51	Bruce Taylor	LB	6'2"	237	r-Fr.
52	Barquell Rivers	LB	6'0"	237	r-So.
94	Mark Muncy	LB	5'11"	218	r-Sr.

#	KICKERS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
30	Brian Saunders	P	6'0"	199	r-Jr.
97	Brent Bowden	P	6'3"	206	r-Sr.
48	Justin Myer	PK	6'1"	210	So.
49	Matt Waldron 3	PK	5'11"	198	r-Sr.
2	Davon Morgan	ROV	6'0"	196	Jr.
23	Matt Reidy	ROV	6'1"	217	r-Sr.
24	Dorian Porch	ROV	5'11"	209	r-Sr.

## NEBRASKA ROSTER

#	QUARTERBACKS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
17	Green, Cody	QB	6'4"	215	Fr.
12	Kellogg Jr., Ron	QB	6'1"	210	Fr.
5	Lee, Zac	QB	6'2"	210	Jr.
3	Martinez, Taylor	QB	6'1"	185	Fr.
7	Spano, Kody	QB	6'2"	215	RFr.
15	Washington, Latravis	QB	6'3"	225	Jr.

#	OFFENSIVE LINE	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
66	Barrett, Cruz	OL	6'5"	260	Fr.
72	Burkes, Jaivorio	OL	6'4"	310	Jr.
58	Caputo, Mike	OL	6'5"	295	Jr.
51	Chapek, Brandon	OL	6'1"	275	So.
77	Choi, Seung Hoon	OL	6'5"	320	Fr.
62	Christensen, Andy	OL	6'2"	295	RFr.
71	Coffey, Jesse	OL	6'3"	310	Sr.
74	Henry, Ricky	OL	6'7"	290	Fr.
67	Hickman, Jacob	OL	6'4"	300	Jr.
73	Jones, D.J.	OL	6'4"	295	Sr.
52	Jones, Dwight	OL	6'5"	315	Jr.
78	Jones, Marcel	OL	6'4"	240	Fr.
75	Lingenfelter, Luke	OL	6'7"	310	So.
63	Meyer, Derek	OL	6'4"	255	So.
69	Nickens, Brodrick	OL	6'5"	315	Sr.
76	Qvale, Brent	OL	6'5"	285	Fr.
57	Sirles, Jeremiah	OL	6'7"	335	Fr.
65	Smith, Mike	OL	6'6"	280	Fr.
79	Thompson, Brandon	OL	6'6"	290	Jr.
59	Thorson, Brian	OL	6'6"	290	RFr.
50	Toalioa, Quentin	OL	6'3"	300	RFr.
68	Williams, Keith	OL	6'4"	300	RFr.

#	RUNNING BACKS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
30	Hays, Mike	FB	6'1"	240	So.
48	Legate, Tyler	FB	5'10"	225	RFr.
37	Thomsen, Kevin	FB	6'2"	235	So.
10	Helu Jr., Roy	IB	6'0"	215	Jr.
28	Jones, Austin	IB	5'10"	210	So.
29	Okafor, Collins	IB	6'1"	225	RFr.
14	Ward, Lester	IB	6'3"	215	RFr.
22	Burkhead, Rex	RB	5'11"	200	Fr.
22	Makovic, Jordan	RB	5'10"	195	RFr.
27	Robinson, Dontayevous	RB	6'1"	215	Fr.
34	Wallace, Jeremy	RB	6'1"	235	RFr.
31	Zimmerer, C.J.	RB	6'0"	215	Fr.

#	RECEIVERS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
2	Bell, Antonio	WR	6'2"	180	Fr.
1	Brooks, Chris	WR	6'2"	215	Sr.
82	Cammack, Wes	WR	5'11"	200	Sr.
42	Clark, Tyson	WR	6'4"	185	Fr.
6	Cooper, Khiry	WR	6'2"	195	RFr.
87	Dixon, Taylor	WR	5'11"	190	RFr.
35	Failla, Nick	WR	5'10"	180	Fr.
11	Gillelen, Curenski	WR	6'0"	220	So.
8	Henry, Will	WR	6'5"	215	Jr.
18	Holt, Menelik	WR	6'4"	220	Sr.
85	Hyland, KC	WR	6'6"	205	RFr.
4	Kildow, Ty	WR	5'7"	165	Fr.
84	Kinnie, Brandon	WR	6'3"	215	So.
9	Lester, Ben	WR	5'10"	170	So.
26	Marlowe, Tim	WR	5'10"	175	RFr.
32	Mendoza, Marcus	WR	5'10"	185	So.
21	Osborne, Steven	WR	6'4"	195	RFr.
24	Paul, Niles	WR	6'1"	215	Jr.
16	Watson, Adam	WR	6'0"	195	Jr.
91	Barry, Robert	TE	6'8"	220	Fr.
83	Bechtold, Damon	TE	6'4"	235	RFr.
81	Cotton, Ben	TE	6'6"	240	RFr.
80	Hill, Ryan	TE	6'3"	250	So.
89	Kerr, J.T.	TE	6'4"	230	Fr.
41	Long, Jake	TE	6'4"	230	Fr.
88	Martin, Jay	TE	6'2"	225	So.
86	McClure, Mychael	TE	6'5"	235	RFr.
44	McNeill, Mike	TE	6'4"	240	Jr.

25	Reed, Kyler	TE	6'3"	225	RFr.
47	Wells, Brett	TE	6'4"	200	Fr.
49	Young, Dreu	TE	6'4"	245	Jr.

#	DEFENSIVE LINE	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
95	Allen, Pierre	DE	6'5"	265	Jr.
70	Anderson, Kenny	DE	6'2"	240	RFr.
9	Ankrah, Jason	DE	6'4"	250	Fr.
92	Fahie, Tyrone	DE	6'3"	255	Jr.
91	Glassman, Dan	DE	6'4"	250	Jr.
80	Harvey, David	DE	6'4"	275	Sr.
81	Long, Spencer	DE	6'4"	250	Fr.
65	McDermott, Colin	DE	6'2"	240	RFr.
66	McDermott, Conor	DE	6'2"	240	RFr.
34	Meredith, Cameron	DE	6'4"	260	RFr.
99	Turner, Barry	DE	6'3"	265	Sr.
98	Williams, Josh	DE	6'4"	245	RFr.
47	Yancy, William	DE	6'4"	245	So.
58	Jackson, Justin	DL	6'3"	270	RFr.
78	Kanne, Colin	DL	6'4"	260	Fr.
62	Pensick, Cole	DL	6'2"	260	Fr.
53	Randle, Thaddeus	DL	6'1"	255	Fr.
94	Crick, Jared	DT	6'6"	285	So.
85	Klingelhoefer, Faron	DT	6'2"	255	RFr.
63	Martin, Ben	DT	6'4"	260	Jr.
68	Molek, Josh	DT	6'3"	245	RFr.
90	Moore, Terrence	DT	6'3"	285	So.
55	Steinkuhler, Baker	DT	6'6"	295	RFr.
93	Suh, Ndamukong	DT	6'4"	300	Sr.

#	DEFENSIVE BACKS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
21	Amukamara, Prince	CB	6'1"	200	Jr.
39	Blatchford, Justin	CB	6'1"	195	RFr.
14	Blue, Anthony	CB	5'10"	185	So.
31	Dean, Jase	CB	6'0"	185	RFr.
15	Dennard, Alfonso	CB	5'10"	190	So.
7	Gomes, Dejon	CB	6'0"	190	Jr.
23	Thorell, Lance	CB	6'1"	195	So.
5	West, Anthony	CB	6'0"	205	Jr.
11	Green, Andrew	DB	6'0"	180	Fr.
2	Middleton, Lazarri	DB	6'1"	190	Fr.
16	Richards, Wil	DB	5'11"	185	Fr.
10	Washington, Dijon	DB	6'0"	175	Fr.
92	Mangieri, P.J.	LS	6'4"	245	Fr.
67	Meginnis, Sam	LS/LB	6'2"	220	RFr.
4	Asante, Larry	S	6'1"	215	Sr.
8	Cassidy, Austin	S	6'1"	210	So.
3	Ebke, Jim	S	6'0"	215	So.
28	Hagg, Eric	S	6'2"	205	Jr.
29	Jameson, Seth	S	6'1"	180	Fr.
43	Moravec, Brent	S	6'0"	185	RFr.
33	O'Hanlon, Matt	S	5'11"	200	Sr.
12	Osborne, Courtney	S	6'3"	185	RFr.
13	Smith, P.J.	S	6'2"	205	RFr.
3	Thenarse, Rickey	S	6'0"	205	Sr.

#	LINEBACKERS	>>>	HT	WT	YR.
38	Camarata, Joseph	LB	5'10"	225	RFr.
51	Compton, Will	LB	6'2"	220	RFr.
52	Dillard, Phillip	LB	6'1"	240	Sr.
42	Fisher, Sean	LB	6'6"	230	RFr.
41	Grove, Thomas	LB	6'2"	225	Jr.
35	Holt, Matt	LB	6'0"	200	So.
57	Hron, Mitch	LB	6'2"	220	Fr.
54	Koehler, Colton	LB	6'1"	230	Sr.
44	Kreikemeier, Micah	LB	6'3"	215	RFr.
40	Lawrence, Blake	LB	6'3"	220	Jr.
37	Lewis, Tyrone	LB	6'2"	195	Fr.
49	Manninger, Matt	LB	6'1"	220	RFr.
46	Martin, Eric	LB	6'2"	215	Fr.
36	May, Mathew	LB	6'1"	210	So.
56	Paulsen, Devin	LB	6'2"	210	Fr.
59	Starkebaum, Colby	LB	6'1"	215	Fr.
30	Stoddard, Graham	LB	6'2"	225	RFr.
45	Whaley, Alonzo	LB	6'1"	225	RFr.
48	Williams, Chris	LB	6'0"	230	Fr.
93	Kuhl, Adam	LS	6'2"	255	Fr.





**M**ike McNeill arrived for his scheduled media interview carrying a turkey sandwich.

The time was noon, and McNeill had just eaten lunch at the Nebraska football team's training table. The wrapped sandwich, he said, was merely a snack he'd have in a couple of hours.

What if he wasn't hungry then?

He'd have to eat the sandwich, anyway.

"If I can," McNeill said, "I try to eat every three hours."

He has to if he's going to

It's delicious. Strawberries and whipped cream. Oh, it's so good."

That, of course, is a rare delight in McNeill's meal plan. In fact, McNeill said he's not a big breakfast eater, anyway, but has to get the day started with something. And then eat again. And again.

"I've got to take eating a little more seriously," he said, "because I can't lose the weight."

A significant weight loss during the 2008 football season concerned McNeill and his coaches, thus the dietary focus for Nebraska's accomplished junior tight end.

The 6-foot-4 McNeill, who weighed as much as 246 pounds, said he played the Gator Bowl game at 227.

"I was basically the size of Todd Peterson," McNeill said with a laugh.

# 6,500 CALORIES & COUNTING

reach the 6,000 to 6,500 calories Nebraska sports nutritionist Josh Hingst requires McNeill to consume each day.

In an ideal world, McNeill might go to IHOP each morning, scarf down about a third of that calorie total for breakfast and only worry about another meal or two.

"I get the stuffed French toast," McNeill said. "It's like cream cheese and some vanilla filling.

But he wasn't joking.

"No, seriously, I was only like 10 pounds heavier than Todd," he said.

At first, the weight loss was negligible, and position coach Ron Brown thought McNeill looked a bit faster. McNeill, too, said he felt like he was a step quicker and was running well.

"But as the season went on, I could just tell," McNeill said. "It

BY BRIAN ROSENTHAL









wasn't like I was a great blocker, anyway, but it certainly didn't help losing all the weight. It just made it harder to handle 280-pound guys on the edge than if I were 10 or 15 pounds heavier."

McNeill said a bad schedule last year affected his eating habits. He'd eat lunch at 10:30 a.m., then go to consecutive classes, then to football meetings, then to practice, and not eat again until 6:30.

The weight loss affected his workouts, too. He lost 30 pounds off his bench press.

"My overall strength just really started to go down. That killed me toward the end of last year," he said. "You have smaller muscles up top that you lose quicker, and that's tough."

McNeill said he spent much of the summer rebuilding his upper body. He finished fall camp weighing 242 pounds, and as long as he doesn't drop below 240, coaches will be satisfied, he said.

"It was pretty quick to get back up to about the 235 range, but I've always struggled to put on weight," McNeill said. "So getting up to 245, which is where they really want me, is pretty tough for me. It sounds ridiculous, but those last three or four pounds are really... it involves like a lot of extra eating."

So how about another peanut butter and

jelly sandwich? That's a McNeill favorite – "It has good fats in it," he said – along with those shakes Hingst provides players after every practice.

Even McNeill's girlfriend reminds him to eat an extra bite or two when he thinks he's full.



**"It sounds ridiculous, but those last three or four pounds are really...it involves like a lot of extra eating."**

*Mike McNeill*

"I have a metabolism like through the roof," McNeill said, "so I have to just stuff my face to gain those couple of extra pounds."

McNeill, a native of Kirkwood, Mo., came to Nebraska weighing 218 pounds. His high school coaches never made a big deal to McNeill about gaining weight, and McNeill didn't worry, either.

"I was a receiver, basically," he said. "So as long as I made plays and caught the ball, they didn't really care what I weighed. And blocking in high school's a lot different than blocking in the Big 12, so it wasn't a big deal."

McNeill played defensive end as a high school freshman, but Kirkwood coach Larry Frost – not the same Larry Frost that played at Nebraska, McNeill is quick to point out – told McNeill he'd make a spot just for him playing tight end on the varsity team.

There was one condition: McNeill had to forgo playing baseball in the spring and focus on lifting weights.

That was the first time McNeill, who



weighed about 180 at the time, had ever lifted weights. He was able to gain just enough weight, as this coincided with his natural growth spurt.

Otherwise, McNeill's high metabolism, combined with his very active lifestyle, made it difficult for him to put on – or keep on – extra pounds.

Growing up, McNeill was a swimmer, played center field and pitched in baseball, was a forward in soccer and played point guard in basketball until the eighth grade, when he moved to the post.

When he wasn't doing organized sports, he was throwing a baseball outside with his father or playing hockey with his neighbor, who was a goalie.

"He'd want me to shoot at him all the time," McNeill said. "Sometimes I put on the pads, but I was a terrible

goalie. But I was good at shooting. I had fun taking shots on him."

McNeill would've played on a hockey team himself, but his parents wouldn't allow it. The only ice time in the Kirkwood area was on a Sunday morning. That was church time.

"I mean, I'd probably be in the NHL right now," McNeill said with heavy sarcasm.

Instead, he's a football player who set a Nebraska season record in 2008 for most receptions by a tight end, with 32. Overall, he was the team's third-leading receiver, and figures to be a big target this season for quarterback Zac Lee.

The key for McNeill is making sure he stays a big target. Literally.

Venough lifting," McNeill said, "my body will stay fine."



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**JERRY TAGGE**

*All-American Quarterback,  
1970-71*



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## Plenty of options

BY RICK SHAW

Last month's change of heart by Blue Springs, Mo., standout **KEESTON TERRY** to attend school at Kansas rather than Nebraska left the Huskers without a true wide receiver pledge for their 2011 recruiting class. Though Waverly, Neb., athlete **TYLER EVANS** could end up playing the position, he's also being looked at as a possible defensive back candidate for the Big Red.

Despite the setback, at least a handful of top receiving prospects remain on Nebraska's recruiting board. The Huskers hope to reel in two or three by the time they wrap up their class in early February.

One of the fastest receiver prospects in the country, **CURTIS CARTER**, hails from Stonewall, La., North De Soto. The 5-foot-10, 160-pound speedster, ran 4.37 seconds in the 40 at two camps over the summer. Though he's being heavily recruited by a number of major colleges, he said the Huskers are currently No. 1 on his list.

"I have offers from Nebraska, TCU, Alabama, Missouri, Mississippi State, Louisiana Tech and McNeese State," Carter said. "Nebraska has been my No. 1 for a while now. They've been recruiting me hard. Coach 'J.P.' (**JOHN PAPUCHIS**), that's my man. We've built a great relationship. We just don't talk football; we talk about everything."

Carter, rated a 4-star prospect and one of the top eight players in the state by Rivals,



com, is scheduled to visit Lincoln on Oct. 16 for the Huskers' match-up against Texas Tech. He doesn't expect, however, to arrive at a final decision until the end of the year.

"I'm going to go to Alabama, and I'm going to go to Missouri," Carter said. "Those, in addition to my trip to Nebraska, are three I'll see for sure. I'll probably make my decision around Christmas time."

The lightning-quick Carter piled up over 1,000 all-purpose yards last season and 17 touchdowns.

Denton, Texas, Ryan wide receiver **BUD SASSER** may not have the same blazing speed as Carter but, at 6-3, 200 pounds, he has a good combination of size and athleticism to cause match-up problems for opposing defensive backs. Like Carter, he

holds the Huskers high on his list of college favorites.

"It might be Nebraska who is actually recruiting me the hardest because I talk to (former Denton Ryan player) **JOSH WILLIAMS** (current Husker defensive end) quite a bit," Sasser said. "He talks to me about going up there and taking my visit. My top three (schools) are Nebraska, Missouri and Kansas."

Rated the nation's No. 62 receiver prospect (3-stars) by Rivals, Sasser caught 64 passes as a junior for 1,250 yards (19.5 yards per catch) and 24 touchdowns.

"Bud is special," Denton Ryan head coach Joey Florence said. "We've had some great receivers here, and I put him up there with the best of them. I think he's one of the top receivers in the state if not the country. For a big guy, he uses his body well. He's a Michael Irvin-type."

Sasser holds scholarship offers from Arizona, Arizona State, Kansas, Missouri, Texas Tech and Nebraska, among others.

**AUSTIN HILL** and **TYLER SLAVIN** are two highly recruited receivers out of Corona, Calif., Eleanor Roosevelt High who will be visiting Nebraska on Nov. 6.

"My cousin, **ANDREW GREEN**, is a cornerback for Nebraska," the 6-3, 192-pound Hill said. "I texted him to let him know I'd be there in early November and he was pretty pumped. He says it's crazy up there. He told me the fans love



their football. If it's exciting to him, I think it will be exciting to me, too."

Hill, currently rated the No. 99 prospect in the state by Rivals (3-stars), earned first-team all-league honors as a junior after catching 34 passes for 625 yards (18.4 yards per catch) and seven touchdowns. He's considering offers from Arizona State, Arizona, Colorado, Nebraska, Northwestern, Utah and others.

Slavin (6-2/182), rated a 3-star prospect by Rivals, has already trimmed his list of college possibilities to five. He said the Huskers officially made the cut.

"I plan to visit Arizona, Washington, Nebraska, Colorado and Northwestern," Slavin said. "I'd like to take all of my visits before making a decision."

Slavin picked up first-team all-league honors as a junior after catching 22 passes for 501 yards and eight touchdowns.

Another receiver planning to take an official visit to Lincoln this fall is **BOBBY SWIGERT** of Louisville, Ohio. The 6-1, 175-pounder took an unofficial trip to Nebraska in July and enjoyed the experience. As a result, he has grouped the Huskers in his final top five along with Boston College, Michigan, Pittsburgh and Stanford.

Rated the No. 72 receiver in the country (3-stars) by Rivals, Swigert had 58 catches for 732 yards and six scores as a junior.

The Huskers have yet to solidify a receiver on their 2011 pledge list. With a number of high quality prospects left on the board -- all with a high level of interest in the Big Red -- it shouldn't be difficult for Nebraska to add a couple of commits at the position between now and February.

## NEBRASKA'S SCHEDULE VISIT LIST

NAME	POS.	HT	WT	DATE	COMMIT
Jay Guy	DT	6-1	300	11/7	California
Austin Hill	WR	6-3	192	11/7	
Joshua Mitchell	DB	5-11	165	11/7	
Harold Mobley	ATH	6-4	225	11/7	
Tyler Slavin	WR	6-2	182	11/7	
Curtis Carter	ATH	5-10	161	10/17	Oklahoma St.
Chase Harper	TE	6-6	248	9/26	
Chase Rome	DE	6-3	290	9/26	
Bobby Swigert	WR	6-1	175	9/26	
Colin Tanigawa	OL	6-3	286	9/26	
Harvey Jackson	DB	6-2	185	9/5	Nebraska
Tejay Johnson	ATH	6-2	190	9/5	
Mike Moudy	OL	6-7	291	9/5	Nebraska
Donovan Vestal	DE	6-5	240	9/5	Nebraska



## IN STATE SPOTLIGHT

BY SEAN CALLAHAN

The best football player in the state of Nebraska for the recruiting class of 2010 is not even debatable at this point. Aurora offensive lineman **ANDREW RODRIGUEZ** is a member of the Rivals.com Top 100 and he's regarded as one of the top players in the country.

Huskers Illustrated recently talked with Rodriguez.

**CALLAHAN:** What was it like going against Crete's Ryne Reeves earlier this season?

**RODRIGUEZ:** It was fun going against one of my future teammates. We both pushed each other pretty good. There were a lot of pats on the back and "good jobs" said to each other.

**CALLAHAN:** In a million years did you ever think moving to Aurora from New York City would change your life this much?

**RODRIGUEZ:** No I didn't. I really didn't know what to expect when I moved here. Aurora has been a great place though, and it's really changed my life.

**CALLAHAN:** What was the biggest culture shock for you about moving to Aurora?

**RODRIGUEZ:** I would just say the biggest thing I've had to get used to is living outside of the city. For most of my life I was used to living in a crowded city, and it's obviously way different living out here.

**CALLAHAN:** Yankees or Mets?

**RODRIGUEZ:** Yankees. I've always been a Yankees fan for my whole life. That's my team.

**CALLAHAN:** What's a show you don't miss on television?

**RODRIGUEZ:** I like to watch Smallville. I don't know why, I guess I just like how it's about a small town, and it reminds me of out here a little bit.

**CALLAHAN:** What's your favorite thing to eat for dinner?

**RODRIGUEZ:** I love fried chicken, but there aren't very many KFC's out this way.

**CALLAHAN:** Who's your favorite player to watch for Nebraska?

**RODRIGUEZ:** My favorite guy to watch is (Ndamukong) Suh, no doubt. I've really never been able to talk to him much, but I've seen him working out in the weight room this summer. He's fun to watch.



# Recruiting Notebook

## Adding more Texans to the mix

by Sean Stevens

Since taking over at Nebraska, **BO PELINI's** staff has really put an emphasis on the state of Texas. The 2008 and 2009 recruiting classes combined to produce 17 signees from the Lone Star State, including two true freshmen from the '09 class who have already seen game action — quarterback **CODY GREEN** and running back **REX BURKHEAD**.

With one Texan already committed for the 2010 class in defensive end **DONOVAN VESTAL** (6-5/240/3 stars) of Arlington, the Huskers looked to add another in Missouri City defensive back **HARVEY JACKSON** (6-2/190/3 stars).

Jackson was leaning towards delivering his commitment prior to his official visit to Lincoln for NU's season-opening 49-3 victory over Florida Atlantic.

"Yeah, I'm planning on it," Jackson said. "I just want to see if they're a hard-working and dedicated team. Facilities and that stuff aren't that important to me."

Apparently he saw what he expected, and before heading home, Jackson gave his pledge to the Husker staff.

"It wasn't what I expected; it was so much better," he said. "I liked everything about it -- the fans, the coaches, and the players."

Just two days after Jackson's commitment, cornerback **CIANTE EVANS** (5-11/170/3-stars) of Arlington, Texas brought the Texan total to three with his pledge. Evans' decision came as a bit of a surprise. In late August he was planning a trip to Utah Sept. 25 and was likely to visit Oklahoma State as well. Nebraska was a possible third visit.

"I haven't decided on the third yet. It will probably be Nebraska or Illinois - most likely Nebraska," he said at that time.

That was before he changed his mind.

"I actually just made a decision," Evans said. "I went ahead and committed to Nebraska. Coach (**TIM BECK**), he was excited and can't wait for me to get up on campus for an official visit. He was fired up."

Evans also had offers from Arizona State, Illinois, Iowa, TCU, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, Oklahoma State, Kansas and Utah. He talked about why he chose Nebraska.

"It was really hard between Nebraska, Oklahoma State, Kansas and Utah. But, I just thought this was the best choice for me," Evans said. "It was just being able to be around the players, the coaches, and stuff. It was how the coaches interacted with the players. And the quality of education."

Evans won't make any additional trips now.

"That will probably be my only trip, to Nebraska." **N**

## SIDELINES

### LUCKY NUMBER SEVEN

The Huskers picked up their seventh oral commitment for the 2010 class.



**WALKER ASHBURN**, a 6-3, 245-pound defensive end out of River Ridge, La., John Curtis High, made his pledge to Nebraska coaches after watching the Huskers beat Florida Atlantic in the season-opener.

"Really, after watching Nebraska's first game on television, I saw the way the defense played and I thought they did really good," Ashburn said. "I especially thought that the defensive line did pretty good. It just kind of came to me, 'Why not get it over with and be done with it?'"

"I had a lot of offers, but Nebraska is the best place for me."

Ashburn, rated a 3-star prospect by Rivals.com, chose the Huskers over Oklahoma State, Southern Miss, Stanford, SMU and others. The talented pass rusher had 90 tackles, 12 sacks and three forced fumbles as a junior and helped lead John Curtis to the Class 2A state championship.

## 2010 Nebraska Commitment List (8)

Name (Rivals.com ranking)	Pos.	Ht.	Wt.	Hometown (School)
Walker Ashburn ★★	DE	6-3	245	River Ridge, La. (John Curtis)
Ciante Evans ★★	CB	5-11	170	Arlington, Texas (Juan Seguin)
Tyler Evans ★	ATH	6-2	180	Waverly, Neb. (Waverly)
Tyler Gabbert ★★	QB	6-0	190	Ballwin, Mo. (Parkway West)
Harvey Jackson ★★	DB	6-2	185	Missouri City, Texas (Hightower)
Mike Moudy ★★	OL	6-7	291	Castle Rock, Colo. (Douglas County)
Andrew Rodriguez ★★	OT	6-6	300	Aurora, Neb. (Aurora)
Donovan Vestal ★★	DE	6-5	240	Arlington, Texas (Bowie)





## DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEXAS

BY JOHN TALMAN  
RECRUITING PUBLISHER,  
HUSKERSILLUSTRATED.COM

# Recruiting class taking shape with commits

**IT FEELS GOOD** to know that college football is underway again.

On top of the season-opener excitement, Nebraska recruiting has had one very impressive week, as well.

As the Huskers move their way through the non-conference schedule, they have picked up three more commits from the summer. They include a pair of Texas defensive backs in Ciente Evans and Harvey Jackson, along with Louisiana defensive end Walker Ashburn.

The one question I continually get asked, aside from "who will commit next," is how many spots are in this class. This week is a perfect example of how a year with a small projected class has gone from a cloudy picture of uncertainty to a much clearer situation. Not to mention, the opener against Florida Atlantic produced a highly talked-about comment from the Owls' head coach about the Huskers' overall talent level.

Regardless, the Big Red may be closer to their goal of a top-quality roster than some realize.

Let's recap.

The Huskers have had just one official-visit weekend so far. Of the four official visitors, two were uncommitted. One of those, Jackson, pulled the trigger on his visit. The other, New Jersey athlete Tejay Johnson (who told me just a week before that he has run a 10.3-second 100-meter dash as his best time) has NU in the lead after the trip.

There are two more non-conference

home-game weekends where the Huskers can host more visits. With an early start at Arkansas State, look for the Sept. 26 match-up with Louisiana Lafayette to be the next big visit weekend. It's very tough to get California and Florida kids to Lincoln with a kickoff before 2:30 p.m. at the earliest.

Now that we're caught up, let's continue to point out some facts as you watch the recruiting class for 2010 shape up.

This will be a small class.

At the low end, you're looking at 15 to 17 prospects. In terms of commitments on signing day, since 2001, the lowest Nebraska has had before pen was put to paper was 19.

So things are certainly different.

This class could get to 20. Regardless, we're still not talking about a large group.

Yet what looked like a slow start to 2010 has shot to eight total commitments in less than a week. That's even with the de-commitment (mutual separation is probably a more apt description) of Anterio Sloan, the Arkansas cornerback who lost contact with NU recently and decided to back out of his commitment.

Oh, and let's not forget; before Sloan, the Huskers lost 4-star wide receiver Keeston Terry to Kansas, where his father played.

Momentum didn't seem to shift, however. The Huskers kept plowing through. Heck, the first game weekend spawned more commits not visiting campus for the season-opener compared to those who actually visited.

Why is this? What does this all mean?

How does this affect future Huskers?

One thing that can be said for this coaching staff is, they certainly have a great grasp of not only on-the-field coaching but also evaluation. Hey, just look at the season-opener. You see true freshman such as running back Rex Burkhead, quarterback Cody Green and linebacker Eric Martin making waves in their first collegiate competition. Were they all the most highly recruited prospects out of high school? Not necessarily. However, it appears finding prospects that fit the scheme quickly hasn't been a problem for this staff on the recruiting trail.

So with the eight commits for 2010, a solid start for the class of 2009 and a promising group of redshirted freshmen from the 2008 recruiting class already flashing ability this fall, it's interesting to think about what Florida Atlantic coach Howard Schnellenberger said after Saturday's game: "I think they have some very good players, but they're not overly talented."

Many people believe long-term talent is the product of practice and training, not just God-given ability. If that is true, it appears the Husker coaches are showing signs of upgrading their talent level for the future rather quickly, going into just their second season at Nebraska.

Yes, it's one game and it's one recruiting class we're watching.

I'll go out on a limb, though, and say that the future looks bright. **N**



# Volleyball

LINDSEY LIGHT

BY BOB HAMAR

## Lincoln is land for the lefties (like Lindsey Licht)



Lisa Reitsma. Sarah Pavan. Nancy Metcalf. Lindsey Licht.

The first three were volleyball All-Americans at Nebraska. Licht, a right side hitter for the Huskers, hasn't reached that level yet, but she has something in common with the others that coaches can't teach.

All four are left-handed.

"We'd like to be 'Lincoln the land of lefties,'" Nebraska coach John Cook said.

Cook loves left-handed right side players because they have a better angle to hit from than the right-handers do. That's what the Huskers get from Licht, a 6-foot-5 five junior from Aurora, Colo.

Being left-handed gave Licht an edge at right side over the right-handed Brooke Delano, who is now playing almost exclusively at middle blocker for the Huskers.

"With Lindsey, the room for error with the setters is much greater," Cook said. "They can pretty much set it from anywhere.

"The other thing is when we're out of system and somebody is setting a high ball, with Brooke to come in as a right-hander is one of the hardest things to do in hitting."

Licht didn't exactly light the world on fire



early this season, but Cook was just glad to have her on the floor after she had both shoulder and foot surgery in the off-season.

Licht had some huge matches last season, like the 17-kill (.500 hitting percentage) performance early in the season against Texas in Lincoln. But the injuries caught up with her late in the year.

She was terribly sore when the Huskers lost at Texas on Nov. 19. She did her best to fight through the pain but had just seven kills and hit a negative-.133 for the match.

"We knew it was really sore, but it was one of those things you play through it," Cook said. "We knew she'd probably have surgery on it."

Licht did just that in January when she had surgery on both her foot and shoulder at the same time. Those surgeries kept her off the court during spring drills.

The foot surgery also landed her in a wheelchair for about a month. Combine that with the loss of her left hand and the independent Licht had to call on help from her mom.

Licht had to eat right-handed, which wasn't easy for her, but she was determined to do things on her own. She said she and her mother would get in fights when she wanted to do too much.

It wasn't easy at the time, but Licht knew in the long run it had to be done.

"I knew it would benefit the team and myself for this season," Licht said. "I knew if I tried to play on my foot and my elbow it wouldn't be good. My doctors said I had a 50-50 shot making it through the entire season. That right there told me to get it done and over with."

Delano played the right side in the spring and showed Cook she could handle the job if needed. At that time, and even later in the summer, Cook wasn't sure if Licht would play at all this year.

"We were harboring the impression that

she might not even play," Cook said. "She worked really hard, and obviously the surgeries went really well for her. We feel really good about where she's at. She has a chance to be a better player this year than she was last year."

Licht had a good fall camp, but it was a little tougher when the Huskers opened the season at the Runza/AVCA Showcase with a 3-0 loss to Michigan. Licht came back a night later and produced late in a 3-2 victory over Minnesota.

"The thing that impresses me most about Lindsey, we get to the fifth game (against Minnesota) and she made a couple of huge plays," Cook said. "That's what we need from her. We need her to be a big-play maker and a point-scorer for us."

## MAES BACK IN LINCOLN

Husker volleyball fans saw a familiar face at the NU Coliseum when Virginia played in the Ameritas Players Challenge Sept. 10-12. Virginia head coach Lee Maes was an assistant for the Huskers from 2005 through 2007 before taking the job at Virginia.

His freshmen class was rated the 15th best recruiting class in the country. It marked the first time Virginia has had a nationally ranked recruiting class.

"I think it was a great move for him," Cook said. "Virginia is a great university, a great location. He's already brought in two really good freshmen. He has another really good class coming in next year. You can recruit to Virginia, and he's capitalized on that. I think he's completely changed the culture there of the volleyball program. I know he's worked very hard to do that."

## DEFENSE RULES

The 2008 Huskers were known as a tough defensive team. Cook believes this year's team can be just as good because of the improvement he saw between the first

and second weeks of the season.

"Are we there yet? No," Cook said. "But I'm looking at two months from now. I saw our defensive block improve significantly in one week. I'm encouraged by that because I think it's something that will continue to be a strength."

A big reason for that optimism comes from the team's blocking, particularly from Delano and Licht.

"Brooke is changing things in the middle," Cook said. "Brooke has a chance to be a real good blocker. Licht is a better blocker than last year because I don't think she's worried about her elbow. You get those kids up there and they're changing shots, changing hitter's mentalities." **N**

### 2009 VOLLEYBALL SCHEDULE

Aug. 22	Red/White Scrimmage, 7 p.m.
Aug. 28-29	Runza/AVCA Showcase
Aug. 28	*vs. Michigan, L, 3-0
Aug. 29	*vs. Minnesota, W, 3-2
Sept. 1	Creighton, W, 3-0
Sept. 4-5	at LSU Tournament
Sept. 4	vs. UL-Lafayette, W, 3-0
	at LSU, W, 3-2
Sept. 5	vs. Tulane, W, 3-0
Sept. 10-13	Ameritas Players Challenge
Sept. 10	Virginia, 7 p.m.
Sept. 11	BYU, 7 p.m.
Sept. 13	^UCLA, 2 p.m.
Sept. 16	Texas Tech, 7 p.m.
Sept. 19	at Colorado, TBA
Sept. 23	at Texas A&M, 6:30 p.m.
Sept. 26	Texas, 1 p.m.
Sept. 30	at Oklahoma, 7 p.m.
Oct. 7	Kansas, 7 p.m.
Oct. 10	Kansas State, 7 p.m.
Oct. 14	at Baylor, 7 p.m.
Oct. 17	at Missouri, 6:30 p.m.
Oct. 21	Iowa State, 7 p.m.
Oct. 24	Oklahoma, TBA
Oct. 28	at Texas Tech, 6:30 p.m.
Oct. 30	at Texas, 6:30 p.m.
Nov. 4	Missouri, 7 p.m.
Nov. 7	at Iowa State, TBA
Nov. 13	Texas A&M, 7 p.m.
Nov. 18	Baylor, 7 p.m.
Nov. 21	at Kansas, 6:30 p.m.
Nov. 25	at Kansas State, 7 p.m.
Nov. 28	Colorado, 7 p.m.
Dec. 4-5	NCAA 1st/2nd Rounds, TBA
Dec. 11-12	*NCAA Regionals, TBA
Dec. 17	NCAA Semifinals, Finals
	* at Qwest Center, Omaha
	^ at Bob Devaney Sports Center



# Basketball

DOC SADLER

BY BRIAN ROSENTHAL

## Huskers pass "airport test" entering season

**D**oc Sadler is happy to report his Nebraska men's basketball team can now pass the airport test.

That is, the Huskers at least look big enough to be a Big 12 Conference team.

The same couldn't have been said of last year's crew, unofficially the smallest among 330 Division I teams.

By comparison, this year's roster has no players shorter than 6 feet.

"At least now, when we walk through an airport, we'll at least look like a team," said Sadler, entering his fourth season as Nebraska's head coach.

Size comes in the form of 6-foot-11, 235-pound center Brian Diaz, a freshman who redshirted last season.

"Brian Diaz is a guy who stayed here all summer and has gotten stronger," Sadler said.

Size comes in the form of 6-8, 240-pound forward Quincy Hankins-Cole, a junior college transfer whose strength is rebounding.

"He's not in the shape we need him to be in," Sadler said, "but when he's out there in individual workouts, you can tell he can really help us."

And size comes in the form of 6-8, 210-pound forward Christian Standhardinger, a player who excites Sadler despite the fact Standhardinger will be forced to sit Nebraska's





first 15 games, as a result of an NCAA ruling.

Brandon Ubel, a 6-9, 220-pound forward, is a freshman who will contribute. Sadler also likes the athleticism of 6-5, 185-pound wing Myles Holley, a sophomore transfer Sadler called "a high-rising dude."

All of the aforementioned players will make their Husker debuts this fall.

"I really like this basketball team, as far as the talent and the size," Sadler said. "Athletically, I think for the first time, with size, we at least look like a team that belongs to be a member of this league that we play in."

"Unfortunately, we're looking like a team in a bad year because this league is going to be really, really difficult. As most people know, it's going to be considered the top league in the country."

Nebraska's size increase would've been more impressive had sophomore Christopher Niemann not suffered a second ACL tear. A 6-11, 265-pound center, Niemann had surgery Aug. 27 and will miss the season. That puts more pressure on Diaz, who's not a natural back-to-the-basket player.

"Now, he's going to be kind of forced to play a position that's probably not his position in the low post," Sadler said. "In the long run, it's going to help him, but I was really looking forward to playing him and Christopher together, because then you really look like a team. And then you complement because both of them can pass so well."

On the bright side, Nebraska has Standhardinger – a surprise, of sorts. The coaching staff had figured mid-summer that the German recruit wasn't going to be academically eligible. But he was cleared, and arrived in Lincoln on Aug. 28.

"It was good news for us," Sadler said. "Christian is a guy who will eventually be a very, very good player for us."

Standhardinger can play in Nebraska's two exhibition games but must sit out the non-conference portion of the schedule.

That's his penalty from the NCAA for playing on a German club team in which teammates were paid.

Sadler said mixing Standhardinger into the lineup midway through the season could be a delicate process.

"If you're winning a lot of games, it's going to be hard to go with a lot of new people. If you're losing a lot of games, you're probably glad he does come. I hope it's the first more so than the latter."

"A lot depends on, obviously, how well he picks up a lot of things. It's not like we do a lot of things, anyway. It's not like we're real complicated."

## WAIVER GRANTED

In a move believed to be unprecedented, the NCAA granted Nebraska a waiver of the 13-player scholarship limit for the

### 2009 MEN'S BASKETBALL SCHEDULE

Nov. 6	Arkansas-Fort Smith (exh.), 7 p.m.
Nov. 10	Hastings (exh.), 7 p.m.
Nov. 14	South Carolina Upstate, TBD
Nov. 18	at Saint Louis, TBD
Nov. 21	TCU, TBD
Nov. 24	UMKC, 7 p.m.
Nov. 29	at USC, TBD
Dec. 2	Texas-Pan American, 7 p.m.
Dec. 6	at Creighton, TBD
Dec. 10	Chicago State, 7 p.m.
Dec. 12	Oregon State, TBD
Dec. 19	Jackson State, 7 p.m. at Las Vegas Classic
Dec. 22	vs. Tulsa, 7 p.m.
Dec. 23	vs. BYU or Nevada, 7 or 9:30 p.m.
Dec. 29	Southern Utah, 7 p.m.
Jan. 2	Maryland Eastern Shore, TBD
Jan. 5	Southeastern Louisiana, 7 p.m.
Jan. 9	at Texas A&M, 3 p.m., Big 12 Network
Jan. 13	Kansas, 8 p.m., ESPN2
Jan. 16	Iowa State, TBD
Jan. 23	at Missouri, 5 p.m., Big 12 Network
Jan. 27	at Colorado, TBD
Jan. 30	Oklahoma, 12:30 p.m., Big 12 Network
Feb. 2	Kansas State, 7 p.m., Big 12 Network
Feb. 6	at Kansas, 5 p.m., ESPN
Feb. 10	Baylor, 8 p.m., ESPN2
Feb. 13	at Texas, 3 p.m., Big 12 Network
Feb. 17	at Kansas State, TBD
Feb. 20	Missouri, 5 p.m., Big 12 Network
Feb. 24	at Iowa State, TBD
Feb. 27	Texas Tech, 3 p.m., Big 12 Network
Mar. 2	Colorado, TBD
Mar. 6	at Okla. St., 12:30 p.m., Big 12 Network at Big 12 Championship
Mar. 10-13	at Kansas City, Mo. (Sprint Center)

2009-10 season.

Nebraska can have 14 scholarship players for one season, and must return to the 13-player limit by 2010-11.

"It's extremely rare," said Josh White, Nebraska associate athletic director for compliance. "In my search for precedent, I didn't find any."

Nebraska based its appeal on Christian Standhardinger. Nebraska had determined that Standhardinger, a native of Germany, wouldn't meet NCAA academic eligibility requirements. Coaches then offered Standhardinger's scholarship to Adrien Coleman, who committed in late July.

What the NCAA didn't tell Nebraska is that it had changed the grading process when reviewing transcripts of players from Germany. Under the new scale, Standhardinger was actually eligible.

"To throw out a legal term," White said, "we detrimentally relied on misinformation published by the NCAA."

Nebraska can play, with only 13 players this season. Niemann will miss the season with a knee injury, meaning NU won't be required to redshirt a player.

## REVIEWING REDSHIRTS

Sadler said he's taking a different approach to redshirting players.

That decision comes after two of the four players he redshirted in his second year at Nebraska – Alonzo Edwards and Alex Chapman – have transferred.

"We've had a couple of guys I thought could've helped us, maybe not so much this year, but in the next two years, that just didn't want to sit and wait," Sadler said.

"My philosophy hasn't changed, but being realistic about it, I don't know that kids will let you do it. I don't know if the patience is there. It's definitely going to benefit Toney McCray and Brandon (Richardson), but kids want that immediate satisfaction of playing right now."

Now, rather than the coach suggesting a redshirt to players, Sadler said the players must convince the coach that's what they want. **N**



ARI GOLDSTEIN



## CROSS COUNTRY Goldstein back after missing 2008 season

BY TOMMY DAHLK

**L** fall, Nebraska senior cross country runner Ari Goldstein felt like a zombie – and she figured that wasn't necessarily a bad thing.

"I just was feeling worn out, but I was running a lot of miles at the time, so I thought it was kind of a normal thing," Goldstein said.

But finally, the senior from Soldotna, Alaska, was too tired to even function. Eventually, she had to pay a visit to the doctor.

The doctors kept asking her if she had ever had mononucleosis. Goldstein said

she nearly laughed because she knew she couldn't possibly have it.

But sure enough, Goldstein's senior season would start out with a case of mono.

After a week of rest, Goldstein started to feel better and started to slowly get back into the mix.

The comeback was short-lived, however, because she once again started to feel more exhausted than usual and this time, she had more "classic" mono symptoms, including an extreme sore throat.

Once the doctor diagnosed that she still had mono, Goldstein had no choice





but to shut down for the rest of the fall and give her senior cross country season another try in 2009.

With the season over early, Goldstein took a month off in order to make sure she truly was over her illness. That wasn't easy for the two-time All-Big 12 selection.

"It was not a good feeling," Goldstein said. "Every runner thinks time off is great if it is on your terms. But it is horrible when you are forced, just because you don't know when you will get to run again and you feel like you are getting so far behind. It is not at all relaxing like it should be when you decide to take time off to recover."

When the illness went away for track season, another injury, this time a torn tendon in her foot, sidelined her again.

But after nearly a year trying to get healthy, Goldstein said she feels ready

#### 2009 WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY SCHEDULE

Sept. 5	at Creighton/UNO Classic at Omaha, Neb. (Chili Greens), 8 a.m.
Sept. 19	Woody Greeno / Nebraska Invite Lincoln, Neb. (Pioneers Park), 10 a.m.
Oct. 3	Wisconsin Inter-Regional Invitational at Madison, Wisc., 11 a.m.
Oct. 17	Indiana State Pre-Nationals at Terre Haute, Ind., 10 a.m.
Oct. 31	Big 12 Championships at Columbia, Mo., 10 a.m.
Nov. 14	NCAA Midwest Regional at Springfield, Mo., Noon
Nov. 23	NCAA Championships at Terre Haute, Ind., 11 a.m.

to reclaim her spot as one of the best runners in the Big 12.

Although the injury setbacks were tough, Goldstein said her attitude has greatly improved, and she looks to make the best of her second senior season, regardless of what happens.

"You just need to get your mind at some point to approach it in the best possible light," Goldstein said. "You need to look forward to where you are at and not where you were. You have to think you can get back to where you were before or better, or there is really no point in doing it at all." **N**

#### 2009 WOMEN'S CROSS COUNTRY ROSTER

NAME	YR.	HOMETOWN (HIGH SCHOOL)
Carrizales, Rachel	Sr.	Morrill, Neb. (Morrill)
Crofford, Lara	Jr.	Newville, Pa. (Big Spring)
Furlan, Jessica	So.	Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada (Dr. Martin Leboldus HS)
Goldstein, Ari	Sr.	Soldotna, Alaska (Soldotna)
Hamik, Erica	So.	Kearney, Neb. (Catholic)
Marsh, Elizabeth	Sr.	Wichita, Kan. (East)
Miller, Ashley	So.	Tipton, Iowa (Tipton)
Webers, Jen	Jr.	Conifer, Colo. (Conifer)
White, Katie	So.	Broken Bow, Neb. (Broken Bow)





**BLUE CHIPPER** - Jeff Smith, a blue-chip recruit out of Wichita, Kan., Southeast High School, had the unenviable task of succeeding 1983 Heisman Trophy winner Mike Rozier at I-back. Smith, a senior in 1984, started quickly, rushing for 473 yards in the first two and a half games, before suffering an ankle injury that would hamper him the rest of the season and give sophomore Doug DuBose an opportunity. DuBose rushed for 1,040 yards to lead the Big Eight. Smith finished with 935 rushing yards to rank second. He also led the conference in all-purpose yards and ranked second nationally in punt returns. Both he and DuBose earned first-team All Big Eight recognition. Smith carried 26 times for 183 yards and one touchdown in the Cornhuskers' 38-7 victory against Minnesota (shown here), the second game of the season. The Cornhuskers, who began the season ranked No. 2 in the Associated Press poll, moved up to No. 1 after an opening-game victory against Wyoming but dropped to No. 8 after a loss at Syracuse in the fourth game, only to climb back to No. 1 before losing to Oklahoma at season's end.

## GAMES REMEMBERED

Dec. 31, 1996 • Orange Bowl, Miami, Fla.  
(first meeting between the schools)



Bowl interest among Cornhusker fans was down dramatically, coming on the heels of back-to-back national championships – and an opportunity at another following the 1993 season.

Despite a 19-0 loss at Arizona State in the second game of the season, snapping a 26-game winning streak, Nebraska still could have been in the national championship hunt at bowl time if not for a 37-27 loss to unranked Texas

in the first Big 12 championship game at St. Louis.

Any residual effects of the Texas loss were eliminated in a 17-point second quarter, against a Virginia Tech team ranked No. 10 in the Associated Press poll and playing in the school's fourth consecutive bowl game. The year before, the Hokies had defeated Texas in the Sugar Bowl.

Senior I-back Damon Benning, starting for just the second time in 1996, was named Nebraska's most valuable player of the game after rushing for 95 yards and two touchdowns.

Sophomore I-back Ahman Green, the team's leading rusher, was slowed by a stress fracture in his left foot, and freshman I-back DeAngelo Evans was sidelined by a severe groin injury.

The Cornhusker offensive line was shuffled for the game, with sophomore Josh Heskew getting his first career start, at center. All-American Aaron Taylor, a junior who had started every game

### Nebraska 41, Virginia Tech 21

Virginia Tech	7	7	7	0	-	21
Nebraska	0	17	14	10	-	41

(VT) Marcus Parker 19 pass Jim Druckenmiller (Shayne Graham kick)  
(N) Kris Brown 25 field goal  
(N) Scott Frost 5 run (Brown kick)  
(N) Jason Peter 31 fumble return (Brown kick)  
(VT) Shawn Scales 6 pass Druckenmiller (Graham kick)  
(N) Damon Benning 33 run (Brown kick)  
(VT) Cornelius White 33 pass Druckenmiller (Graham kick)  
(N) Benning 6 run (Brown kick)  
(N) Brown 37 field goal  
(N) Frost 22 run (Brown kick)

**Attendance:** 51,212

at center, moved back to left guard, where he played in 2005, and Chris Dishman, who had started every regular-season game at left guard, moved back to left tackle. The line wore down Virginia Tech's defense, clearing the way for Nebraska to score on its first four possessions of the second half.

The Cornhuskers approached preparations for the bowl game the same way they had the previous three years, traveling to Miami three days before Christmas to begin on-site practices.

**TOM OSBORNE:** "At times, this almost felt like a non-game, in terms of intensity and in terms of interest. I was sorry for that."

**DID YOU KNOW?** Attendance was the lowest for an Orange Bowl game since Jan. 1, 1947. The game, the first not held at the Orange Bowl Stadium, was played at 75,000-seat Pro Player Stadium, home of the Miami Dolphins and Florida Marlins. Virginia Tech sold more than 25,000 tickets, with most of them used, while Nebraska sold about half of its 15,000-ticket allotment. According to an Omaha World-Herald estimate, no more than 3,000 who attended the game were dressed in Cornhusker red.



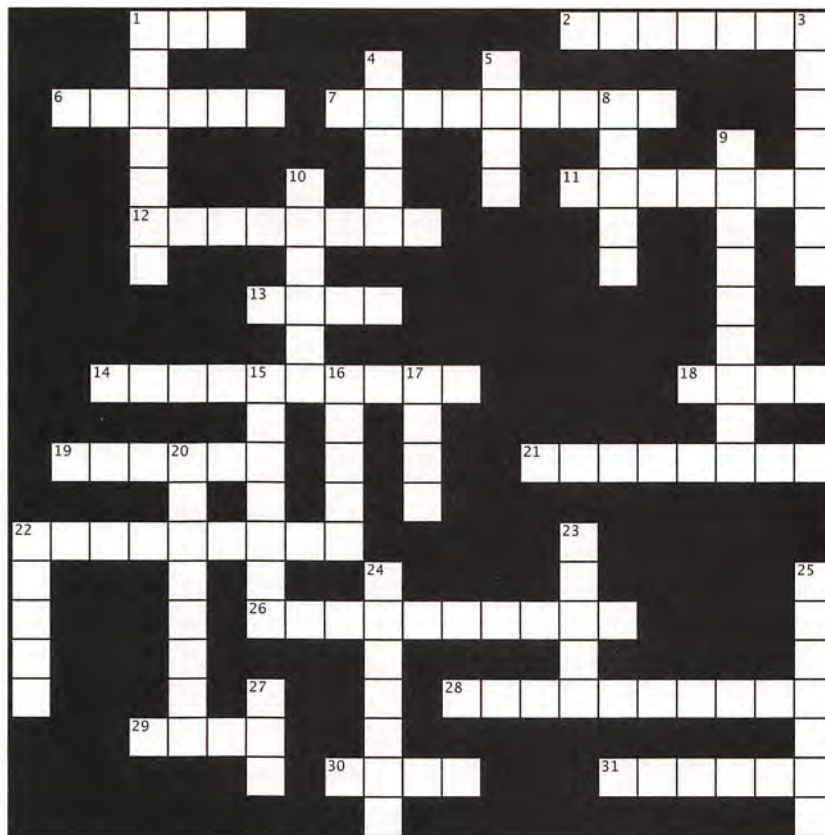
# CROSSWORD & TRIVIA

## ACROSS

1. Network for NU-Virginia Tech telecast
2. 1992 Outland Trophy winner
6. Virginia Tech head coach
7. Oct. 17 opponent
11. Recruiting coordinator
12. Opponent in Big 12 opener
13. Virginia Tech All-America QB in 1999
14. Virginia Tech campus location
18. Punt returner
19. True freshman linebacker
21. True freshman running back
22. Had 51-yard TD catch in opener
26. Zac Lee's home state
28. Wears No. 15 (offense)
29. Scored 3 TDs in opener
30. Scored NU's first TD this season
31. Linebackers coach

## DOWN

1. Defeated Virginia Tech in season opener
3. Secondary coach
4. Offensive line transfer from Kansas State
5. Network for NU-Missouri telecast
8. Blocked field goal in opener
9. Oct. 24 opponent
10. Virginia Tech nickname
15. Kickoff specialist
16. Ex-Husker and St. Louis kicker
17. Ex-Husker and Tampa Bay linebacker
20. Leading tackler in opener
22. True freshman quarterback
23. Offensive lineman from Nevada
24. 1997 Lombardi Award winner
25. Wears No. 15 (defense)
27. Lombardi Award, Outland Trophy candidate



Answers will appear in the Sept. 26 issue

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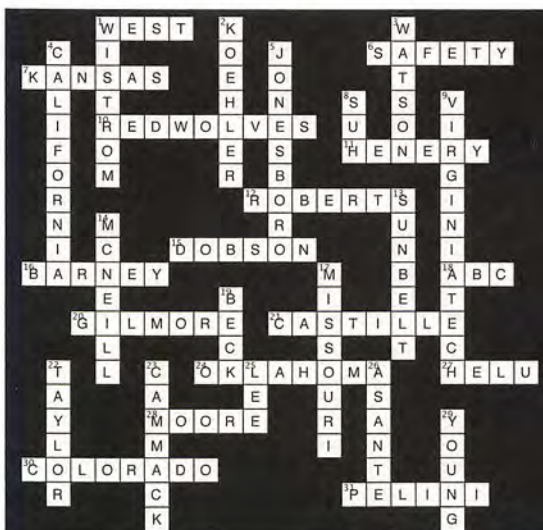
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## SEPT. 12 CROSSWORD SOLUTION







## THE FINAL WORD

BY MIKE BABCOCK

# Zac Lee is one cool customer

**AT LEAST ONE** of Zac Lee's 35 passes against Arkansas State shouldn't have been thrown. On a scramble to avoid a defender, he threw across his body.

Such a pass violates a "never rule," as established by offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach Shawn Watson. And Lee knew it. "I kind of actually thought about it after the play, like, 'Wow, he's going to be pissed about that,'" Lee said. "But during the play, I just reacted."

Watson suggested that reporters ask Lee about the play. But "there's not a whole lot I can say about it because he made a great play," said Watson. The pass was complete.

The bottom line: Lee has earned Watson's trust.

When he misses an assignment, as he also did, "he takes ownership," Watson said. "He isn't ho-hum about it. 'Hey, Wats, I missed it. I just missed it. It's my fault.'"

"You appreciate that. I don't say anything."

So Lee wasn't perfect in the Cornhuskers' 38-9 victory. But he was certainly closer than not, completing 27-of-35 passes for 340 yards and four touchdowns, without an interception.

If a receiver was open, Lee found him, and put the ball where it needed to be.

"The thing I like about him the most, he's so daggone efficient. He's so poised. He doesn't get rattled by anything. He is an unbelievable student (of offense)," said Watson.

Later in the interview, Watson said of Lee: "This dude is a cool customer, man."

Such an assessment should be comforting to Nebraska fans as the Cornhuskers travel to Blacksburg, Va., this week to play Virginia Tech. Rivals.com has rated the Hokies' home – 66,233-seat Lane Stadium/Worsham Field – as the toughest place to play in college football.

Crowd noise is the most significant consideration, according to Cornhusker center Jacob Hickman. Lee has "great poise, and I think he'll be able to handle it," Hickman said.

"Poise is actually the key to him, for a quarterback, especially going into a hostile environment. If you don't have poise, you're going to crumble under pressure."

Hickman agrees with Watson. Lee is a cool customer.

Lee also understands his role as leader of the offense. He commended his offensive line. He dismissed the two times he was sacked with: "That happens. That's football. You're going to get hit. You're going to get sacked." And he completed passes to 11 different receivers.

Everyone was part of Lee's act on this afternoon.

"We had guys get open, and it's easy to throw to open guys when you're protected, just hanging out in the pocket, really," Lee said, describing the numbers he put up as "decent."

But, he added, "Hopefully, that's how it is every week. That's kind of my goal."

Lee doesn't lack confidence. As always, Watson asked him what passes he would be comfortable throwing in order to get in a rhythm during the Arkansas State game.

"I was just like, 'You know what,

whatever you call. Hopefully, I kind of wake up in a rhythm on game day,'" said Lee. "So he did a great job of calling plays. He knows me pretty well."

By now, everyone on the team seems to know Lee well.

"He's a high-energy guy, so sometimes he'll just kind of jump around a little bit, especially after a big play, kind of be like high-fiving a little bit," Hickman said. "For a guy who hasn't played a ton at this level, he's got great poise overall, and you really don't see anything getting to him negatively."

In his first two games as the starter, Lee has shown to be a capable successor to Joe Ganz. The offense hasn't missed a beat, despite Lee's inexperience.

Against Arkansas State, he left no doubt about his ability to find open receivers and get the ball to them with textbook efficiency and zip reminiscent of Dave Humm and Vince Ferragamo.

He has a strong arm, no question. His passes travel with authority.

Those whose job it is to protect him have to admire his work in retrospect. "Really, with Zac, all I want from him is, him to make all the calls and then I want to look up and have a completion," said Hickman. "In the film room afterwards then I get to say, 'Hey, I really like how you played.'"

"But out there . . . it's just kind of like, 'Hey, good call and nice throw, I guess.'"

"Nice throw" wouldn't apply to at least one pass, which violated a Watson "never rule."

Even so, it worked. And that's the bottom line. **N**





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#### 2009 Nebraska Football Schedule

Date	Opponent	Location	Time/Results
Sat, Sep 05	Florida Atlantic	Memorial Stadium	W, 49-3
Sat, Sep 12	Arkansas State	Memorial Stadium	W, 38-9
Sat, Sep 19	at Virginia Tech	at Blacksburg, VA	2:30 p.m.
Sat, Sep 26	Louisiana-Lafayette	Memorial Stadium	6 p.m.
Thu, Oct 08	at Missouri *	at Columbia, MO	8 p.m., ESPN
Sat, Oct 17	Texas Tech *	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct 24	Iowa State *	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Oct 31	at Baylor *	at Waco, TX	TBA
Sat, Nov 07	Oklahoma *	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Sat, Nov 14	at Kansas *	at Lawrence, KS	TBA
Sat, Nov 21	Kansas State *	Memorial Stadium	TBA
Fri, Nov 27	at Colorado *	at Boulder, CO	2:30 p.m., ABC
Sat, Dec 5	Big 12 Championship	Arlington, TX (Dallas Cowboys New Stadium)	TBA

\* Conference games



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